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ABSTRACT

This publication presents a response from the Ontario College of Teachers to the Canadian Minister of Education regarding the newly mandated teacher certification testing. It sets the stage for the provision of complete, accurate, and reliable advice, containing a summary of the extensive research conducted by the College and providing a wide range of options which emerge from the research. It acknowledges the value of consultation and invites input from members of the College, from education stakeholders, and from the public. It lays the foundation for the development of recommendations for consideration by the College Council as it formulates the advice that will be forwarded to the Minister. The paper consists of four main sections: (1) "Maintaining Competency: Survey of Programs and Practices of Ontario Self-Regulatory Bodies"; (2) "Ensuring Competency: Survey of International Programs and Practices in the Teaching Profession"; (3) "Demonstrating Competency in the Teaching Profession: The Ontario Context"; and (4) "Consultation: Addressing the Range of Options Emerging from the Research." A consultation response form is included. (Contains 79 references.) (SM)

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ED 440 943

A Consultation Paper: Formulating a Response to the Letter of November 10, 1999 from the Minister of Education re a Teacher Testing Program

SP039179

Ontario College of Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

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Ministry of Education

Minister

Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Telephone (416) 325-2600
Facsimile (416) 325-2608

Ministère de l'Éducation

Ministre

Édifice Mowat
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1L2
Téléphone (416) 325-2600
Télécopieur (416) 325-2608

Ontario

November 10, 1999

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS
NOV 10 1999
EXECUTIVE

Ms. Donna Marie Kennedy
Chair, Governing Council
Ontario College of Teachers
121 Bloor Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 3M5

Dear Ms. Kennedy,

In a rapidly changing world, we have an obligation to ensure that students receive the highest quality education and that teachers maintain their certification by having current skills and knowledge. In order to accomplish this, the Ontario government has made a commitment to require teachers to participate in a teacher testing program.

Since becoming Minister, I have had a number of discussions on many topics with education partners including how to move this important part of our government's agenda forward. I am aware of the College's work on standards of practice and professional learning and I know you share, as the government does, a commitment to quality education and accountability.

Therefore, as one of the important steps in proceeding with this commitment, I am seeking the advice of the College on how to implement a program for teacher testing which is cost effective and within the following parameters:

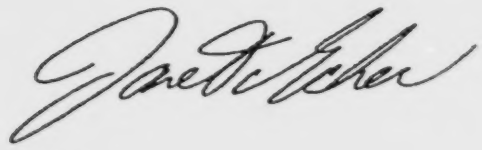
- regular assessment of teachers' knowledge and skills
- methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques
- a link to re-certification
- remediation for those who fail assessments
- de-certification as a consequence if remediation is unsuccessful

It is the government's desire to begin the first phase of implementation in June 2000. With this time-line in mind, I would appreciate it if the College would provide this advice to me by December 31, 1999.

I also understand that several groups, including Faculties of Education and Teacher Federations, have started some important work on a teacher testing program. I encourage you to consult with these organizations and other education partners as you formulate your advice to me.

I look forward to your advice on this important initiative.

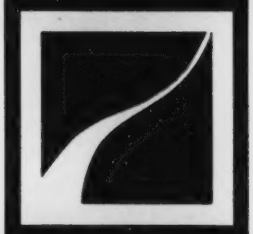
Sincerely,



Janet Ecker
Minister

STAKEHOLDER GROUPS THAT RECEIVED A COPY OF THE MINISTER'S LETTER OF NOVEMBER 10, 1999

Association canadienne-francaise de l'Ontario (ACFO)
Association des agentes et agents de supervision franco-ontariens (ASFO)
Association des conseillères et des conseillers des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACEPO)
Association des directions et des directions adjointes franco-ontariennes (ADFO)
Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)
Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne (AIFO)
Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto (BTMT)
Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)
Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO)
Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)
Education Improvement Commission (EIC)
Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)
Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne (FESFO)
Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education
Ontario Association of Deans in Education (OADE)
Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE)
Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO)
Ontario Catholic School Business Officials' Association (OCSBOA)
Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)
Ontario Catholic Student Council Federation (OCSCF)
Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers Associations (OCSOA)
Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC)
Ontario Coalition for Education Reform (OCER)
Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations (OFHSA)
Ontario Parent Council (OPC)
Ontario Principals' Council (OPC)
Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA)
Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association (OPSOA)
Ontario Secondary School Students' Association (OSSSA)
Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF)
Organization for Quality Education (OQE)
Parent Network Ontario
Parents partenaires en éducation
People for Education
Teachers for Excellence (TFE)



Introduction

Ontario College of Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

Introduction

Teacher Testing

In April of 1999, the words *teacher testing* entered the lexicon of the Ontario teaching profession. A News Release from the Office of the Premier, dated April 19, 1999 stated: *"To ensure that every child has a teacher that is up-to-date and well qualified, all Ontario teachers will be required to participate in a testing program. Teachers will be required to take and pass regular re-certification examinations"*. This News Release initiated questions, debate, and controversy in both the public and education sectors.

Premier Harris reiterated his support for teacher testing in a May 1999 News Release issued by the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party during the provincial election campaign underway in Ontario. Harris said that teacher testing is the logical next step of his many reforms to improve quality and accountability in the education system. He also indicated in this release that *"One of our first priorities following the election will be to ask the College of Teachers to prepare a workplan to move ahead with implementation of teacher testing"*.

On May 28th, the Premier provided specific information regarding the administration of the teacher tests. He indicated in a speech at Sheridan College in Oakville that: *"The tests, administered by the Ontario College of Teachers, are to begin in June of next year and be fully implemented by September, 2001"*. Once again the reference to teacher testing served as a lightning rod for media attention and public debate. What would be on a "teacher test"? How would the test actually be administered and graded? What would be required of those who fail? From the College of Teachers perspective, the question was: What would be the College role, if any, in this regard?

Another News Release, dated September 2, 1999, highlighted the determination of the government to pursue the testing initiative.

> *Over the summer, MPPs confirmed that testing the competency of our children's teachers remains important to parents, and Education Minister Janet Ecker is consulting with teachers about how to implement this commitment, Harris said. The Premier announced that Ecker will seek advice and recommendations from the Ontario College of Teachers with the goal of starting the initial phase of testing in June 2000.*

The Chair of the Ontario College of Teachers, Donna Marie Kennedy, indicated in a News Release issued by the College the same day, that the College *"will consult members of the College, the public and other education stakeholders concerning the teacher re-certification process announced by Premier Mike Harris"*. She went on to indicate that the College will *"also want to look at what is done in other provinces, in the U.S. and around the world"*. Questions regarding the nature and success of teacher testing in other jurisdictions needed

answering. Questions relating to the implications of teacher testing in the context of Ontario needed exploring. Kennedy reaffirmed that the College commitment to consultation with its members and the public, and to thorough research, would continue.

A letter to the College of Teachers from Education Minister Janet Ecker arrived November 10, 1999. In her letter, Minister Ecker reaffirmed the *"Ontario government commitment to require teachers to participate in a teacher testing program"*. She wrote:

> *Therefore, as one of the important steps in proceeding with this commitment, I am seeking the advice of the College on how to implement a program for teacher testing which is cost effective and within the following parameters:*
>
> - *regular assessment of teachers' knowledge and skills*
> - *methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques*
> - *a link to re-certification*
> - *remediation for those who fail assessments*
> - *de-certification as a consequence if remediation is unsuccessful*

The letter from the Minister also noted that June 2000 was the target date for the first phase of implementation and encouraged the College to consult with other organizations such as faculties of education and teacher federations as it formulated advice. She requested that the College provide its advice to her by December 31, 1999.

The letter from the Minister was considered by the Council of the Ontario College of Teachers at its meeting of November 18-19, 1999. As a result of its deliberations, Council directed the Executive to create an ad hoc committee of the Council to study and report to the Executive and Council on issues raised by the Minister. During the Council meeting, both elected and appointed members expressed concern that the advice sought by the Minister could not be provided by December 31, 1999 as requested in her letter.

The ad hoc committee, composed of four appointed and five elected members of the College Council, held an initial meeting on November 26, 1999. As part of its agenda, the committee established a timeframe during which the issues raised by the Minister could be considered and a consultation process involving the stakeholders identified by the Minister could take place. The timeline is as follows:

November 26	Ad hoc Committee Meeting
November 26	Letter to Minister
November 29	Letter to Education Stakeholders College web site postings
December 16	Research Briefing Session for Stakeholders
December 21	Ad hoc Committee Meeting
January 10 -11	Ad hoc Committee Meeting
January 27	Report to Executive Committee Meeting

February 9	Report to Special Meeting of Council Ad hoc Committee Meeting
February 14 - March 3	Consultation with Members of the College and Stakeholder Groups
February 28 - March 17	Data Analysis and Priorization of Issues
March 25	Ad hoc Committee Meeting
March 30	Report to Special Executive Committee Meeting
April 10	Report to Special Council Meeting
Week of April 10	First Response to Minister

*The Ad hoc Committee added a meeting on January 22-23, 2000.

In a letter of response to the Minister, dated November 26, 1999, Chair Kennedy indicated that the College timeframe recognized "*...the complexity of the issues outlined by you and ensures that the advice provided by the College is thoroughly researched, is the result of meaningful consultation, and is realistic with regard to the expenditure of human and financial resources*".

This paper, prepared by the Ontario College of Teachers, sets the stage for the provision of what Kennedy calls "*complete, accurate, and reliable*" advice. It contains not only a summary of the extensive research carried out by the College but also provides a wide range of options which emerge from the research. It acknowledges the value of consultation and invites input from members of the College, from education stakeholders, and from the public. It lays the foundation for the development of recommendations for consideration by the College Council as it formulates the advice that will be forwarded to the Minister.

The paper consists of four main sections as follows:

Section A - Maintaining Competency: Survey of programs and practices of Ontario Self-Regulatory Bodies

Following the April 19th announcement by Premier Harris, the Registrar of the Ontario College of Teachers addressed correspondence to her counterparts in the other Ontario self-regulated professions requesting "*information on testing and re-certification in your profession*". As a follow-up to the request, College staff contacted the self-regulated professions directly seeking answers to a survey questionnaire on tools and programs in place that addressed maintaining competence including testing and re-certification. This section of the paper summarizes the results of this undertaking.

Section B - Ensuring Competency: Survey of international programs and practices in the teaching profession

This section of the paper summarizes a review of initiatives established in other jurisdictions to address the issue of teacher competency. The review focuses on current initiatives underway in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, England, Wales, Scotland, France, as well as on recent initiatives in the provinces of Quebec and Alberta. This section also explores issues relating to teacher testing and the relationship between teacher testing and quality education.

Section C - Demonstrating Competency in the Teaching Profession: The Ontario Context

This section of the paper establishes that the regular assessment of the knowledge and skills of College members occurs within two distinct, yet connected, contexts. The first, under the authority of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*, includes licensing and ongoing professional certification. The second, under Regulation 298 of the *Education Act*, includes the assignment and performance appraisal/practice review of members of the College. The latter is the responsibility of the Government of Ontario as the policy-maker for education. The former, delegated to the teaching profession by the government, is the responsibility of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Given these two contexts, and acknowledging the authority of the government to prescribe that the College ensure that its members meet their obligation as professionals to maintain competency, this section attempts to reason why the government would prescribe, without any apparent precedent, the very tools by which a self-regulatory profession will record and assess how its members maintain their competence.

Finally, this section acknowledges that ensuring competency is not the task of the College alone. Rather, it reasons that a systemic approach is required with all education partners assuming lead roles in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

Section D - Consultation: Addressing the Range of Options Emerging from the Research

The summaries of the extensive research carried out by the College of Teachers and outlined in the first three sections of this paper present a wide range of options related to professional competency which will be taken into account in providing the advice requested by the Minister. These options are outlined in this section of the paper. There may be others. All are options. None should be construed as interim advice to the Minister.

With respect to the provision of any advice to the Minister, the College remains committed to open and transparent consultation. This commitment follows the tradition established very early in the short history of the College and evidenced in its work on the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*, adopted by the College in 1999, and in its work on the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the *Professional Learning Framework*.

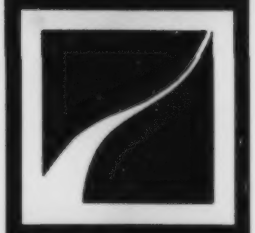
In addition to the structured consultation process with education stakeholders identified by the Minister, this section of the paper encourages College members and members of the public to provide input which will be both welcomed and valued as the College moves through the process of developing the very best advice related to the teacher testing program proposed by the government.

Summary

Public concern about teacher competency is not a new issue. Since the establishment of the Ontario public education system, organizations, commissions, the teaching profession itself, and innumerable researchers from a variety of academic institutions have tried to determine a procedure for defining what constitutes quality teaching. This work has led to more questions than answers.

What are the characteristics of competent teachers? What personal characteristics lead people to become competent teachers? How do we train people to be competent teachers? How do we identify mastery of competent teaching during the training period? How is the process of identifying standards for teachers during the certification process linked to competency in the role? To what degree does the public and the profession determine the criteria for defining the standards and competency levels for the profession? Should the competencies determined for the profession represent a consensus of the research and values? If so, whose research and whose values? The questions are endless. The answers are elusive. The relevance rests in the trust Ontario society places in education as the hope for our future.

The Ontario College of Teachers was founded in 1996 to license and regulate, in the public interest, the practice of teaching. The College recognizes that students, parents and the Ontario public-at-large benefit from a publicly accountable profession. The eleven objects of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act* delineate the responsibility that the College holds to ensure this public confidence. The mandate of the College to govern the teaching profession in the public interest may be viewed to be linked in some fashion to the commitment of the government to the implementation of a teacher-testing program. The challenge is to determine the nature of that link, what constitutes teacher testing in the context of Ontario, and how a process can be enacted in a way that is meaningful to the profession and accountable to the Ontario public.



Section A

Maintaining Competency: Survey of Programs and Practices of Ontario Self-Regulatory Bodies

Ontario College of Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

A. Introduction

This section gives an overview of programs and approaches in place in self-regulated professions in Ontario aimed at maintaining competence. The effectiveness of the various tools and approaches used by self-regulated professions to record and assess the efforts of their members to maintain competence is discussed only in broad terms. However, where it is useful to do so and where information has been obtained in the course of the survey conducted by the Ontario College of Teachers, the programs are described, a context is given for the policy issues raised and these are linked to a broad framework for decision-making. For clarity and comparison, an appendix to this section outlines each of the self-regulatory bodies surveyed, how they are referred to in this section, and their membership totals when available.

In describing the programs, it became necessary to simplify the text by adopting one term where several other terms with similar meaning are used.

The various colleges, institutes and associations which regulate their members are referred to in this paper as ***self-regulated professions*** or *SRPs*.

Quality Assurance Programs (*QAP*) refer to the maintenance of competence programs that have been implemented in health professions governed by the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA).

Ongoing professional learning signifies programs of continuing education or professional development, which may include components such as professional portfolios, courses for credits, reflective practice, etc.

Practice review is used uniformly throughout this section to name portions of programs involving the visit to the place of practice of the member for the purpose of assessing one or all of the following: quality of care, clinical or professional knowledge and physical facilities, including record keeping. These assessments may be carried out by peers or by SRP staff and are referred to in various SRPs as peer assessment, peer assisted review, practice assessment, etc.

Testing is the word used to name the process by which potential registrants have to participate in an evaluation of their knowledge and skill in order to fulfil a requirement for exiting a professional program of training or for registration in a self-regulated profession. The paper also describes the ***testing*** that takes place as part of a quality assurance or maintenance of competence program, in discussing evaluation instruments and strategies otherwise referred to as case-based assessment, core-competencies evaluation, standard assessment, etc.

Re-certification refers to the process where a registrant must meet requirements for the renewal of his or her professional certificate over a certain period of time, often three years to five years. In Ontario, both "re-certification" and "maintenance of certification" appear to be used to convey the same meaning.

B. Self-regulation and Ongoing Competence of Members of Self-regulated Professions

Self-regulation, as stated over thirty years ago by Mr. Justice James McRuer, Chair of the Ontario Royal Commission of Inquiry into Civil Rights (1968), involves the delegation of government regulatory functions to a professional body outside government. The profession must be prepared to fulfil its mandate in an open and accountable manner in order to maintain public confidence in its ability to regulate its members in the public interest. Self-regulation is a privilege that is conferred only to professions meeting certain criteria. Professional qualifications that are grounded in a specialized body of knowledge, and the readiness of the profession to address incompetence and misconduct while maintaining competence are fundamental attributes of a profession that is self-regulated (Brockman, 1998, p. 588).

The obligation for a member of a self-regulated profession to maintain his or her competence is, in theory at least, a direct function of belonging to a "profession". Professionals consider it their duty to maintain competence.

While most SRPs have in place a professional code of ethics and/or standards of practice that refer to the maintenance of the knowledge and skill necessary to maintain an effective practice, accountability is expressed in different ways.

Some SRPs make it a requirement for their members to take part in programs aimed at maintaining their competence through ongoing professional learning and/or participation in practice reviews. Others do not.

Among those SRPs which have implemented or are planning to deliver a program with prescribed elements, the recording and assessment of efforts by members to maintain competence is conducted using a variety of tools or approaches. The philosophy behind most of these approaches favours the protection of the public by way of the education and remediation of members, rather than the more punitive aspects of the disciplinary role of self-regulated bodies.

C. Competence and Accountability

Professional regulatory activity has traditionally focused on two areas: how one becomes a licensed professional and how one loses that license. Self-regulated professions are created with a clear mandate and rules of procedure to stop or limit the practice of incompetent members and members found guilty of professional misconduct.

Work on programs aimed at maintaining competence has often evolved from the recognition that competence issues cannot be dealt strictly within a discipline context. A task force of the Law Society of Upper Canada concluded that as it is "designed to deal more with dishonesty and lack of integrity than with competence issues, the discipline approach has proven to be an ineffective tool for introducing remedial measures to improve poor lawyer performance." (Law Society of Upper Canada, 1998, p.6)

In order to record and assess their members' efforts at maintaining competence, Ontario SRPs have had to define how competence is expressed within their particular professional setting.

In 1997, the Law Society set up a Competence Task Force with a broad mandate to address "the need for change recognized in the *Law Society Amendment Act, 1998.*" (Ibid., p.5) Outlined in the task force report, as well as in documents from other SRPs on this topic, are some of the questions that SRPs have been asking when addressing competence issues:

- What is a competent professional?
- What kind of regulatory authority does the self-regulatory body have over competence or the quality of the practice?
- How is that regulatory authority turned into action?
- What program of activity will best enable the profession to record and assess efforts by a member to remain competent, and also to support efforts by the member to seek remediation when deficiencies are identified?
- How does the role of the employer (where there is one) intersect with the regulated profession's role with regard to maintaining competence?

The context of practice is an important factor in the professional expression of competence and quality of practice, in particular when it comes to determining accountability for professional competence and differentiating the role of the regulatory body from that of the employer in assessing performance and competence.

The College of Nurses of Ontario defines competence as the "ability of a nurse to integrate the professional attributes required to perform in a given role, situation, and practice setting". (College of Nurses of Ontario, 1999, p.11) In developing their definition, the College chose to recognize both "the influence the nurse's role and position plays in influencing competence, and the practice setting within which the nurse is practising." (Ibid., p.12) The profession has taken the broad legislative framework that gives it authority to run programs to ensure quality and promote ongoing competence of its members, and has made the assumption that "a competent nurse practising in a quality practice setting will provide the best possible outcome for the client." (Ibid., p.12)

As SRPs develop the tools that comprise a quality assurance program or any approach to maintaining competence, further work may be done to identify competencies, elements that describe what the professional needs to know to do his or her job effectively. Some SRPs, such as pharmacists and respiratory therapists, have chosen to test members directly on those competencies, often as part of a practice review. In comparison, at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, there is a firm belief that maintenance of competence is tied to performance assessment in a clinical setting, rather than to the testing of competencies through a formal test process. (College of Physicians and Surgeons, [Correspondence] June 25, 1999)

D. Testing

Tests are administered prior to entry to a profession in order that a candidate may show that he/she has the skills and knowledge needed to perform professional tasks without risk to the public.

Chart A, entitled *Testing* groups all SRPs surveyed according to when tests are administered, that is, upon exit from a professional program of training, upon entry into the profession as part of the requirements for registration, and once a person becomes a practising member of the SRP (this is explored further in the subsection entitled Overview of Maintenance of Competence Programs.)

The larger group is by far comprised of SRPs that have a test as part of a series of requirements for registration. Among those, a majority of SRPs has adopted a test developed by a national association or group of self-regulatory bodies for a given profession; the others have developed their own. Two SRPs, Dental Hygienists and Veterinarians, administer their own test to out-of-country/out-of-province applicants, while Ontario-trained applicants take the national test.

SRPs employing tests to measure competence for entry to the profession generally test applicants using two or more examination tools, such as tests with a mix of multiple choice and essay questions or clinical setting assessments with oral interviews. Test content may also determine the choice of a testing tool. The Professional Engineers of Ontario made a decision to retain their paper/pencil, essay question test because they felt that the content of the test (ethics, professional practice, engineering law and liability) did not lend itself well to a computerized, multiple-choice test.

Some professions add another knowledge component, which links to the responsibilities of professional membership. For example, College of Veterinarians candidates have to pass two tests: a first that measures competency and a second administered by the College itself, which tests knowledge in law and ethics. The focus of the test administered by the Professional Engineers of Ontario to all applicants is mainly on law and professional ethics. Tests administered for registration as a pharmacist, land surveyor and optometrist measure both competence and knowledge of law.

Entry to practice examinations are generally taken once the candidate has fulfilled the education requirements of the profession. Dental technicians, pharmacists, and dieticians place the testing requirement after a period of supervised practice where the candidate practises on a temporary licence. A passing grade on the test enables the candidate to become eligible for certification.

CHART A

Testing

Test on Exit from the Professional Program of Training

Midwives (all Ontario-trained applicants)* | **Opticians** | **Optometrists** | **Respiratory Therapists***

(*Also have a test as part of requirements for registration)

Test as Part of Requirements for Registration

SRPs developed and administer their own test:

Agrologists (for applicants who did not complete an Accredited degree program)
Chiropodists
Dental Hygienists (for persons trained OOC/OOP)**
Engineers (Laws and Ethics)**
Land Surveyors
Law Society (for Ontario-trained applicants)**
Massage Therapists
Midwives (for persons trained OOC/OOP, as part of The Prior Learning Experience Assessment)*
Respiratory Therapists (Core Competency Evaluation administered as a registration requirement
Social Workers (planned)
Veterinarians (Laws and Ethics)**

(*Also have a test as part of requirements for registration)

(**SRPs who also use a test developed by a national professional association)

Use test developed by a national professional association or group of regulatory bodies:

Architects
Chartered Accountants
Certified General Accountants of Ontario
Dental Hygienists (for Ontario-trained applicants)**
Dental Surgeons (in January 2000, persons trained OOC/OOPs will be required to complete a 2-year qualifying program instead of the registration test)
Dental Technicians
Dieticians
Engineers (may be administered to persons trained OOC)
Law Society (for applicants trained in Quebec or out of country)**
Medical Laboratory Technologists
Nurses
Occupational Therapists
Pharmacists
Management Accountants
Medical Radiation Technologists
Physicians and Surgeons
Physiotherapists
Psychologists
Veterinarians**

(**SRPs who also administer their own test)

Test Administered to Members

As part of a quality assurance or maintenance of competence program

Test in place:	*Test in development:*
Pharmacist	**Occupational Therapist**
Respiratory Therapists	**Optometrist**
	Nurses
	Midwives (test planned – starting in January 2001, all members will have to take the Emergency Skills Assessment every three years)

For the purpose of maintaining certification/licence:

NIL

OOC/OOP – Out of country/ Out of province

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Ontario-trained candidates and others

Many professions argue that there is an inherent fairness to having a universal entry to practice test requirement based on standards of competence for the profession. Still, in some SRPs that have entry exams, the path to entrance to practice for candidates trained out-of-province and out-of-country differs from that of Ontario trained candidates.

In 1989, the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario addressed the issue of the universality of licensure testing by stating that "it is desirable and preferable that, in any specific occupation, all candidates for licensure who have been assessed as qualified to attempt the licensure examination be required to write the same examination". It further concluded that it was "inappropriate to rule out entirely any additional examination of foreign-trained candidates where it is not required of Ontario-trained candidates", provided development of the test was in keeping with recognized standards of test development and that the candidate was informed of the standard being required relative to performance.
(Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades, 1989, p.178)

E. Quality Assurance or Maintenance of Competence

Quality Assurance and the regulated health professions

Twenty of the twenty-nine SRPs surveyed by the Ontario College of Teachers are governed by the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* (RHPA). The RHPA requires every health profession governed by the Act to have a Quality Assurance Committee.

A key component of Quality Assurance, as it was originally envisaged, was the peer assessment program, similar to the program administered by the College of Physicians and Surgeons since 1980. In addition, as reported by Bohnen (1994, p.102), by the end of the 1980's the Ministry of Health was interested in Quality Assurance in a "broader sense". The quality care provided by the health professional was seen as an integral part of an overall "quality improvement" or systems improvement approach to health care delivery.

The provisions contained in section 80 of the RHPA's Procedural Code call for the regulated health professions to make regulations "prescribing a quality assurance program". It provides no more direction for College programs but confirms in subsection 95 (2) that mandatory continuing education "may" be part of the program. The Ministry of Health eventually provided broad guidelines to the health professions on the objectives of Quality Assurance Programs. It recommended that Quality Assurance Programs contain three components:

> *"1) a component to identify, and to address through remediation, members who are incompetent or unfit to practice,*
> *2) a component to ensure the maintenance and improvement of individual members' competence (this may include continuing education programs), and*
> *3) a component aimed at raising the collective performance of the profession, by focusing on improving patient outcomes."* (Harry Cummings and Associates, 1997, p. i)

Currently, 18 health professions out of 21 have Quality Assurance Regulations published in the Ontario Gazette.

Another feature of the quality assurance programs put in place under the *RHPA* is the means by which they deal with non-compliance. Participation in a quality assurance program is linked conceptually to professional education, maintenance of competence and public protection. The identification of deficiencies in the course of participation in those programs leads generally to an agreement between the committee and the member on a remediation plan and further reviews to verify that deficiencies have been corrected. It does not lead to the immediate removal of the certificate of the member.

Amendments to the Code in 1993 did give health SRPs the power to make regulation authorizing the Quality Assurance Committee to require a member to participate in a continuing education program. If the member fails to participate in the program or to complete it successfully, the QA Committee, if regulations exist to this effect, may "direct the Registrar to impose terms, conditions or limitations on the member's certificate of registration for a period of up to six months."
(RHPA, Procedural Code, s. 95 (2.1), a to c)

Should the Quality Assurance Committee be of the opinion that the member has committed an act of Professional Misconduct or that he or she may be incompetent or incapacitated, the Procedural Code enables the committee to disclose the name of the member and the allegations against him or her to the Executive Committee. The latter initiates a process that could lead the member to be referred to the Fitness to Practise Committee or Discipline Committee after an investigation of the allegations. It is important to note that severe restrictions limit the use of information given by the member as part of a quality assurance program in a discipline or fitness to practise hearing.

Overview of Maintenance of Competence programs

Among the professions surveyed by the College (see Chart B – Approaches in Maintaining Competence), five general approaches to maintaining competence were identified. These include, in the case of Professional Engineers and Veterinarians, the decision not to require participation in such a program.

The majority of health professions have adopted both ongoing professional learning and practice reviews as the tools for tracking their members' efforts at maintaining competence. Architects and General Accountants have done so as well, although the efforts of the latter in the area of practice reviews are mostly focused on members whose practices are governed by the *Public Accountancy Act*.

Many have adopted ongoing professional learning programs in which members are required to assess their own learning needs, keep a portfolio, and report regularly to their SRP on ongoing professional learning activities, without accumulating points or credits for those activities. A smaller number of SRPs require members to accumulate a certain number of points or credits for ongoing professional learning activities within a set period of time. Generally, when a credit or point system is applied, ongoing

professional learning becomes the key part of a QA or maintenance of competence program. The member reports on his or her ongoing professional learning activities to the SRP. Staff members then track the course hours or points or credits gained. Practice reviews sometimes co-exist with a "points for learning" system, but the practice review then is used mostly for the purpose of remediation.

It is interesting to note that both the pharmacists and the respiratory therapists have dropped their credit program recently. Others, such as the opticians, are considering doing so. The latter estimate that the tracking of credits requires a minimum of one staff per thousand members to administer and may be prohibitive for many SRPs. For their part, respiratory therapists concluded that there was no evidence to support the efficacy of a credit system as a mechanism for maintaining competency within their profession.

When they are used together, ongoing professional learning and practice review programs tend to be philosophically and operationally linked, as part of an integrated approach, with a professional learning requirement (such as self-assessment with required reporting of learning activities and maintenance of a portfolio) and a multi-level practice review component. Practice reviews of a random percentage of members represent an opportunity to verify the content of the ongoing professional learning program of the member, with remediation for those showing deficiencies in their practice or refusing to participate in ongoing professional learning.

The following three SRPs have each proceeded with quality assurance programs that include features that are both common to and distinct from the type of program described in this subsection. Part of the Quality Assurance Program of the respiratory therapists is a Core Competencies Evaluation. Physicians and surgeons favour peer assessment. Medical laboratory technologists give their members a choice of program options to consider.

Respiratory Therapists

The respiratory therapists may have dropped their credit system, but ongoing professional learning is still a key component of their Quality Assurance Program. In fact, since 1999, ongoing professional learning has co-existed with a testing component called the Core Competencies Evaluation.

CHART B

Approaches in Maintaining Competence

No Program in Place

Engineers (will be reviewing options for a voluntary ongoing professional learning in 2000)

Voluntary Ongoing Professional Learning

Veterinarians

Ongoing Professional Learning* Requirement Only

Agrologists (prescribed program beginning in 2000)
Chiropodists
Land Surveyors
Midwives
Social Workers (with re-certification)

Ongoing Professional Learning* and Practice Review

Practice Review in Development

Architects
Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists
Dental Hygienists
Dental Surgeons of Ontario
Dieticians
Medical Laboratory Technologists
Nurses
Occupational Therapists
Optometrists
Psychologists
Respiratory Therapists

Practice Review Implemented

Certified General Accountants (practice review for members in public practice only)
Dental Technologists
Law Society (practice review component for members "at risk" only)
Massage Therapists
Medical Radiation Technologists
Opticians
Pharmacists
Physiotherapists

Practice Review Only

- **Chartered Accountants** (practice review for members in public practice only)
- **Physicians and Surgeons**
- **Management Accountants** (practice review for members in public practice only)

Self-Regulated Professions Using Ongoing Professional Learning Credits or Points System

Agrologists
Architects
Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists
Certified General Accountants
Dental Surgeons (planned)
Dental Technologists
Dieticians
Lawyers (for certified specialists only – with re-certification)
Medical Laboratory Technologists
Opticians
Social Workers

*Included under "ongoing professional learning" are all SRPs that require their members to at least report on their ongoing professional learning activities.

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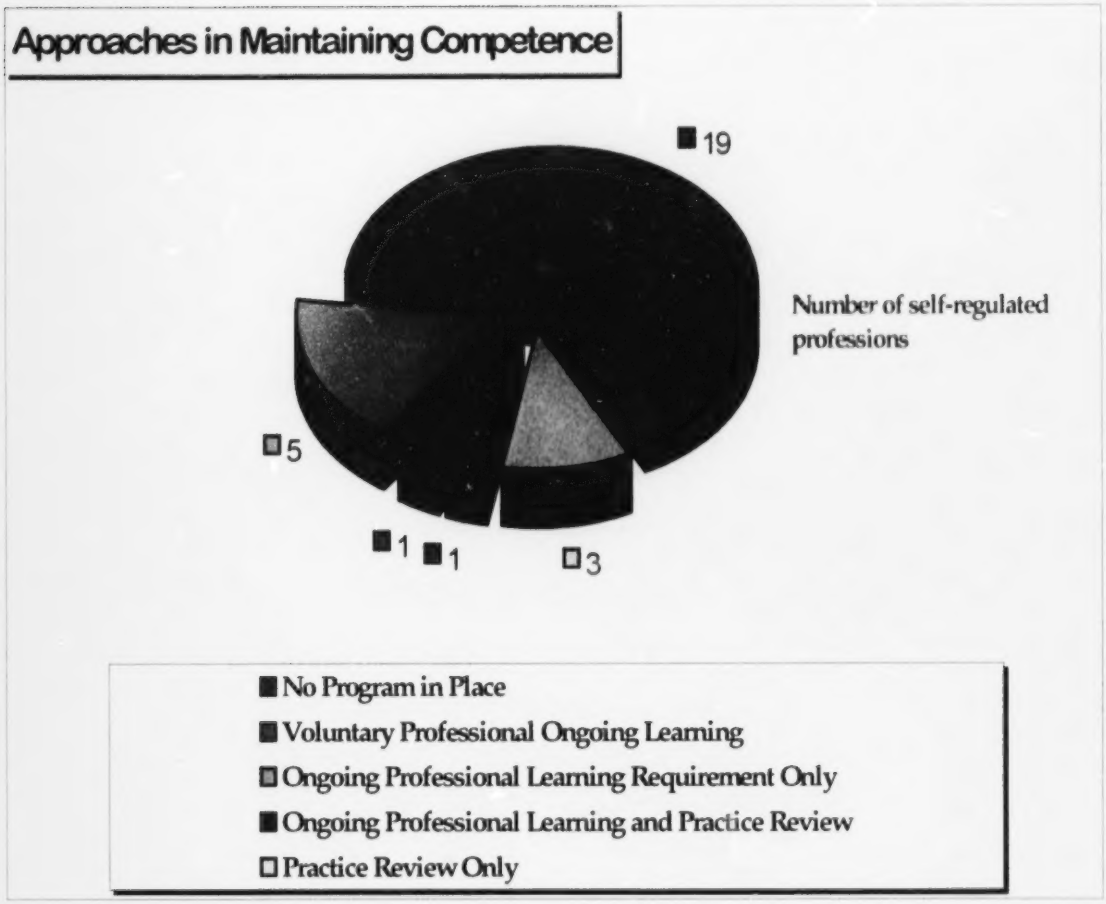

Developed as the first phase of the Competency Assessment Module of the QA program, and based on the basic competencies for the profession, the Core Competency Evaluation is used to supplement the information submitted as part of the member self-assessment for quality improvement activities. The core competencies in the assessment module refer to competencies that are common to all respiratory therapists regardless of their specific area of practice. The evaluation tests the minimum knowledge, skills, abilities and judgements that anyone permitted to use the title "Respiratory Therapist" must possess and be able to demonstrate. It consists of four components, or tests, which measure general knowledge and knowledge of professional issues, application of knowledge, communication issues and ability to demonstrate specific behaviours in a simulated work environment, using a mix of multiple choice questions, case studies, essays and simulations.

The evaluation is scheduled over two days. All practising respiratory therapists will undergo the evaluation within a period of 10 years at the rate of 10% of the 1849 members each year, selected at random. Members who are unsuccessful may be required to undergo a further assessment of their competence in their practice setting. It is hoped that the tool will be helpful in identifying high-risk registrants and assist in focussing resources, through further in-depth assessments, on practices where there may be risk of harm to the public.

A partial version of the Core Competency Evaluation has been used since March 1998 for registration purposes, making it both a requirement for entry and a tool for assessing and maintaining competence.

Other modules to address issues such as remediation, peer review, on-site practice visits, etc. will be added to the Quality Assurance Program as they are developed.

Physicians and Surgeons

In place since 1980, the peer assessment and quality assurance activities of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario focus on the assessment of performance rather than the monitoring of ongoing professional learning or the testing of competencies. These activities include:

a) Peer Assessment Program (since 1980):
   - assesses over 400 physicians a year, by random selection and all physicians who reach 70 years of age. Assessment includes a review of physical facilities, medical records, and the clinical care provided to patients.

b) Out-of-Hospital facility assessments specified by the Independent Facilities Act (since April 1990).

c) Quality Assurance Program:
   - assesses physicans "who need help to improve, and who would have previously been subjected to disciplinary proceedings for clinical errors, omissions, or commissions".
   - the Complaints Committee may give a direction that a physician be referred to a QA program for assessment and remediation of particular clinical and practise deficiency.
   - physician may be identified if he/she has been non-compliant with recommendations made by the Peer Assessment Committee or a physician review program.

d) In-depth comprehensive needs assessment of physicians
   - for physicians who have gone through Peer Assessment or Quality Assurance – to zero in on specific area of clinical deficiency – prescribes specific educational/remediation program.
   (College of Physicians and Surgeons, [Correspondence] June 25, 1999)

The assessment programs are mandatory for physicians who have been identified as requiring an assessment because of random selection or age or a decision by the QA

Committee or a decision by the Complaints Committee following a review of clinical concerns expressed. While the College requires participation in a continuing education program prescribed as a result of a needs assessment, it does not require all members to inform the College of their ongoing professional learning activities.

On average, 1.5% of physicians participate in the Peer Assessment Program each year. In August 1999, the College announced that it would move to conduct peer assessment of all its members over a 10-year cycle. All practising physicians over 70 years of age may expect to be assessed over a cycle of five years.

The Peer Assessment Program is rather unique in Ontario as it has been the subject of a long-term evaluation to follow up on the physicians who had been assessed. The evaluation project was jointly funded by the Sunnybrook Research Foundation and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. Its authors concluded the following:

> *"Data suggest that the Peer Assessment Committee's approach, which balances an education technique with very real authority, has produced a sustained improvement in practice in the group of revisit physicians. This group was in the bottom 10%-15% of performers at initial review. After intervention, they moved up in rank and stayed at least at the average level of performance. Moreover, there was a trend for them to be more likely to be rated in the highest group. The literature suggests that such a dramatic change in performance is rare."*
> (Becket, R., Dunn, E.V., <www.cpso.on.ca/articles.asp?ArticleId=912540323>, 1998)

Medical Laboratory Technologists

The Quality Assurance Program developed by the medical laboratory technologists is designed to promote quality laboratory service, personal growth and development, professional competence and professional excellence. It consists of four components:

a) Completion of a professional portfolio, which includes for all members:
   - a career summary,
   - self-assessment, and
   - a professional development plan

b) Practice review which involves pre-planned, on-site visits conducted by members for members

c) Technical competence evaluations which are conducted by the QA committee and involve a detailed assessment of the competence of a member

d) Program to address behaviour and remarks of a sexual nature

At first glance, this QA program appears to be a good example of the global approach to quality assurance described earlier. Where the program differs from most others is in the choice that is given to members to select one of three options for completing the prescribed "professional portfolio" component of the Quality Assurance Program.

Members may choose to participate in:

- self-directed learning;
- a "professional enhancement" programs with a formal credit system;
- an assessment of technical skills that includes a bench-side peer assessment in which a peer in a workplace setting completes a checklist to determine compliance with established procedures.

Part of the professional learning option includes access to the Quality Improvement Opportunity System (QIOS), which gives on-line access to competency profiles based on professional standards and job requirements. The member may elect to do the technical assessment evaluation for two 2-year cycles after which he or she must provide proof of participation in ongoing professional learning.

College staff indicated that the program was built for maximum flexibility. Members with young families, for example, tend to take advantage of the technical assessment option because the time commitment is more concentrated than with the more formal credit- based professional learning option.

F. The Link Between Maintenance of Certification and Maintenance of Competence

The language of self-regulation is not always standardized, even within Ontario. Terms such as licensure, certification and re-certification may carry different meanings depending on jurisdiction and/or professional context. In its 1995 report, the Pew Commission recommended that the U.S. regulated health professions use standardized and understandable language to clearly describe their regulatory functions for consumers, provider organizations, businesses and the professions.

Organizations that re-certify set requirements for the renewal of the professional certificate. These requirements must be met over a certain period of time, often three to five years. In Ontario, "re-certification" and "maintenance of certification" appear to be used to convey the same meaning.

Among those surveyed, two Ontario SRPs have a re-certification program for all members. These SRPs are voluntary bodies where membership gives the right to use a professional designation or "title". Failure to meet re-certification requirements means the loss of the right to use the professional designation. This, however, does not necessarily remove the ability of a person to continue in his or her chosen profession under another title. In comparison, the majority of SRPs surveyed by the College for this paper are licensing bodies that keep a public register and have a form of monopoly over the hiring of their members by employers, thus preventing non-licensed individuals from working in a regulated profession. By definition, for members of licensing bodies, failure to meet re-certification requirements may mean the loss of the ability to continue to work in a given profession.

Re-certification programs for all members

The Ontario College of Certified Social Workers and the Ontario Institute of Agrologists operate as voluntary self-regulated bodies under administrative law. They both tie maintenance of certification for all of their members to the participation and fulfilment of ongoing professional learning requirements. Currently only those who choose to obtain certification can use the designation "Certified Social Workers" or, in the case of the Agrologists, the designation "Professional Agrologist" or "P.Ag." in Ontario.

As part of the Ontario Institute of Agrologists' program to maintain competence, members must complete a minimum of 60 hours over 5 years, which is recorded in a professional development log. The program is currently administered on a voluntary basis but, after 2000, it will become a compulsory requirement for keeping the professional designation and maintaining membership in the Ontario Institute of Agrologists.

Among the SRPs surveyed for this report, the College of Certified Social Workers is the only one referring to its credit-based ongoing-learning program as a "re-certification program". Certified Social Workers have to accumulate 75 hours of ongoing professional learning credits over a 5-year period to re-certify. The program was phased in between 1994 and 1999 using a prorated credit system with a maximum of 75 hours for five years of certification.

College staff explained that the program grew from the desire to protect the public from delivery of incompetent, unethical or unprofessional practice. The program was very much in line with the continuing competence programs based on ongoing professional learning activities run by the social workers' certification bodies in the United States. The program was further refined using the results of surveys and consultations that confirmed members were already involved in ongoing professional learning activities such as attending lectures, courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, etc.

Currently, the College's Continuing Competency Committee reviews the submissions and determines the consequences, if any, of non-compliance. The Committee may direct the Registrar to renew the certificate or issue it with conditions, in which case the qualifications of the member are reviewed and completion of required courses is delineated. The Committee may make recommendations to the College Council about terminating a member's membership. An individual has the right to appeal a decision of Council.

The Ontario College of Certified Social Workers will end and be replaced by the structure created by the passing of Bill 76, *An Act to Establish the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers*. A transitional Council was set up in June 1999 and elections should be called in June of 2000. It is expected that the new College will review the Ontario College of Certified Social Workers' re-certification program along with other policies and practices, but it will be under no obligation to adopt them.

On the national front, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) is a private voluntary national body that certifies physicians and surgeons, including

those in Ontario, and sets standards of practice and education but does not discipline its members. The RCPSC has recently launched a "maintenance of certification" program where all members will be required to earn 400 credits during 5 years of active practice.

It is a program that recognizes that the learning needs and sources will differ with the many roles that physicians may be called to play. The College has identified a variety of learning options, such as teaching and research activities, group learning in workshops or through distance education and self-assessment, which are assigned a credit/hour value. The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons will keep a register of specialists who have completed the maintenance of competence program. Failure to complete the program requirement will lead to removal of the name of the member from the register and the loss of the use of Fellowship designation. An appeal process will also be implemented.

Re-certification for a group of members only

The Law Society considered but very recently decided not to adopt a credit-based program. While all members must provide information on their continuing legal education activities, participation is not actively tracked except in specific circumstances such as when a member is required to participate in continuing legal education as a result of a practice review or undertaking arising from a discipline hearing.

For a portion of its membership, however, the Law Society has in place what amounts to a re-certification program. Lawyers who are certified as specialists (e.g. in immigration law, labour law, family law, etc.) are required to demonstrate that they have participated in continuing legal education for 12 hours a year when they re-apply for specialist certification at the end of a five-year cycle.

The role statement of the Law Society, adopted in 1994, states that the Law Society will govern the legal profession in the public interest by ensuring that people in Ontario are served by lawyers who meet high standards of learning, competence and professional conduct. The Rules of Professional Conduct also impose a duty on lawyers to be competent.

It is worth noting that none of the four groups referenced – certified social workers, agrologists, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons and Law Society - has adopted a multi-tiered certification system where meeting ongoing professional learning requirements leads to a higher or "advanced" level of certification. Rather, participation in these programs permits one to maintain his/her certification.

Testing for the purpose of re-certification

Testing or formal examinations are used extensively by SRPs as a requirement for entry to practice and, to a lesser extent, to ascertain that practitioners returning to their profession after a long absence have kept their skills and knowledge current. Tests are sometimes administered to active practitioners as part of a quality assurance program with other components. No examples were found of testing being used as a tool for ensuring ongoing competence as part of a re-certification program.

G. Implementation

Most SRPs describe the implementation of their programs in several phases, namely a design and development phase, which includes active consultation with members, followed by a pilot phase and validation or feedback sessions and final adjustments. Throughout all of this activity, there is communication with the members. SRPs communicate program requirements in the course of various outreach activities, including letters to all members, regional information sessions, and articles in the SRP newsletter or magazine.

Since programs are usually phased-in one component at a time, often starting with the ongoing professional learning component and moving on to practice reviews, the components themselves have their own implementation schedule.

Respiratory Therapists are generally considered by other SRPs to be further along in the implementation of their program. The Competency Assessment Module component of their QA program began in September 1996 with a project to identify the core competencies for the safe and effective practice of respiratory therapy in Ontario. That segment was completed in March 1997. This was followed by a comprehensive survey distributed to over 1600 members of the profession and work in small groups of practitioners representative of a diverse range of practice to further define the knowledge, skills, ability and judgement which comprise the core competencies. Following a decision to develop the Core Competency Evaluation in August 1997, the College hired a firm selected from 10 test-developers who responded to a call for proposals. More work occurred with groups of practitioners to "develop and validate the evaluation specifications; develop and provide ongoing item writing and review; and participate in pre-testing, standard setting and translation". (College of Respiratory Therapists, 1998, p.2) A pre-test or trial run of the Evaluation took place in May 1998 for validation purposes. The first sitting of the test was held in August 1998 for registration candidates and in June 1999 for current members, three years after the beginning the work on core competencies.

Beginning with the planning phase, it seems to take SRPs on average between three and six years to arrive at full implementation with an enabling regulation, where one is required, firmly in place.

Issues in implementation

Implementation of a new requirement affecting all members of a profession is never an easy task, and once decision-makers agree on an approach, a SRP still has to have enabling legislation in place before the program can begin. Implementation of QA in some health SRPs was affected by delays in the approval of quality assurance regulations. One council, soon after an election, decided to recall the regulation that had been approved by the previous council and sent to the Ministry of Health in order to change components of the program, thus setting back implementation even further.

Some implementation issues described in the course of the Ontario College of Teachers survey such as resistance from some longer-serving members of the profession and problems with access to ongoing learning programs for professionals practising outside

the larger centres were somewhat predictable. Architects adopted a requirement for continuing education in 1999 with a three-year implementation time frame. They describe their way of communicating the new program to their members as "gentle" with letters to all members explaining the policy, follow up articles in their newsletter, and future plans to organize activities that target specific groups within the membership, such as more senior members.

Sometimes, outreach efforts and implementation strategies are instrumental in building support for a program. For example, once members of the College of Psychologists were made aware of the advantages of the practice review component of their QA program through pilot programs, enthusiasm for the program grew. Many independent practitioners appreciate the opportunity for feedback on their practice and some SRPs offer to carry out voluntary practice reviews along side the programs involving randomly selected participants.

For their part, Audiologists, Speech Language Pathologists, Dietitians, Medical Laboratory Technologists, Midwifery, Occupational Therapists, Respiratory Therapists all became self-regulated with the adoption of the RHPA. They had to face the challenge of setting up the infrastructure that would enable them to meet all aspects of their legislated mandate, and implement quality assurance.

Other broader contextual issues may also impact on the implementation schedule. The challenge of implementing Quality Assurance at a time when the health care sector was undergoing funding cuts was particularly felt by the Nurses. College of Nurses staff mentioned that while the QA program emphasized quality and accountability, nurses were finding it hard to deliver quality care. Their Practice Setting Consultation Program, with its emphasis on a "competent nurse in a quality setting", was a way of recognizing contextual issues within their Quality Assurance Program.

Who pays for maintaining competence?

Generally, members are responsible for their own professional learning, whether it is voluntary or part of a legislated requirement, and the SRP pays for the initial practice review or peer assessments. Members who participate in a practice review resulting in a committee prescribing continuing education or a full-fledged remediation program are sometimes expected to shoulder the cost of their next review.

SRPs offering voluntary peer assessment usually charge a fee to the participating member, as do those that have a testing component as part of their practice review component.

Several SRPs attributed a planned or recent increase in membership fees to the introduction of a Quality Assurance Program or ongoing competence initiative (i.e Optometrist, Nurses, Physicians and Surgeons). Control of costs is raised as the reason that only a percentage of members can be included in a peer assessment or practice review program in a given year in some of the larger SRPs, although per-member costs can vary. With approximately 7000 members, Dental Surgeons are planning to complete 300 randomly selected practice reviews annually at a cost of $70 per member. It has

been reported that the College of Physicians and Surgeons plan to conduct on-site peer assessments of all its members (approximately 26 000) over a 10-year cycle would cost $28 million, which amounts to a little over $1000 per member.

None of the five health professions that have a credit-based ongoing professional learning program, which is known to require a significant amount of staff time, has more than ten thousand members. This could point to the existence of an optimal number of members that enables the organization to sustain a program that requires auditing materials sent by all members.

H. Maintenance of Currency

The implementation of a Quality Assurance or Maintenance of Competence program naturally brings to the forefront the issue of how to ensure ongoing competence of those professionals who either leave their profession, practice it infrequently or want to maintain their membership but are not working directly in their field.

In this area, the privilege of membership is generally balanced with the public interest. In a number of SRPs (Chart C – Maintaining Currency), explicit requirements imposed on applicants returning to active practice vary with the amount of time that they have been away. Other SRPs, such as opticians and social workers, for example, base their re-entry mechanism on the existing Quality Assurance or Maintenance of Competence program, that is, the returning member has a duty to maintain competence through the prescribed program and must have taken steps to maintain competence. If evidence of this is lacking, conditions may be placed on the certificate or participation in a practice review may be required if an individual cannot prove that competence was maintained. In other professions, re-entry requirements are imposed on a case by case basis, by the registrar or a committee of Council.

There is a variety of methods used to assess the currency of a person returning to active practice. They are used alone or in combination. The most common requirements include refresher courses, tests, practice reviews, and the obligation to do a practicum or log a certain number of hours under supervision.

Issues in maintaining currency

In many professions where members are sometimes hired based on their professional qualifications for positions that do not require "active practice", the issue of currency is the subject of ongoing discussion. In some instances, these members are not subject to the same Quality Assurance or Maintenance of Competence requirements. This is the case with the pharmacists who maintain a two-part register. Part A is comprised of pharmacists involved in direct patient care who have a practise requirement of a minimum of 600 hours every 3 years; part B lists the pharmacists involved in non-direct patient care. In order to move from part B to part A, a pharmacist must successfully complete the practice review. Part B members have to do only the ongoing professional learning portion of the QA program.
The search for flexibility in maintaining competence is another concern, primarily for SRPs that have predominantly female memberships. Facilitating re-entry often begins

with ensuring a minimum amount of quality assurance activity during the period of non-practice. The College of Nurses, for example, has developed guidelines to assist non-practising nurses to assess the appropriate level of participation in the QA program:

> *"Non-practising nurses are expected to participate in the reflective practice component by assessing their learning needs and developing a learning plan to meet these needs. Members' learning needs will vary depending on a range of factors, such as when they are returning to practice, if they know to what area of practice they will be returning, if they have experience in that practice area, etc."*
> (College of Nurses of Ontario, 1999, p. 58)

Nurses are still exploring what individuals returning to practice would need to demonstrate following a long period of non-practice, beyond the current obligation to self-assess and develop a learning plan. Currently, it is proposed that nurses would participate in a practice review.

CHART C

Maintaining Currency - Requirements for Returning to Active Practice

Explicit Requirements for Returning to Active Practice

Chiropodists:	- If away 2 years + ➡ 3 months clinical practice + continuing education log
Dental Technicians:	- If away 3 years + ➡required to undergo an approved upgrading course
Dieticians:	- If away 3 years + since last academic program/practicum ➡ refresher course
Law Society:	- If away 5 years + ➡ write examination
Medical Radiation Technologists:	- If away less than 5 years ➡ declaration of ongoing competence with list of activities undertaken ; if away 5+ ➡ retraining program
Occupational Therapists:	- If minimum hours of service requirement not met (i.e., 750 hrs over 3years/ 1550 hours over 5years), applicant must participate in a competency-based clinical review or "re-entry practicum"; refresher courses or packages are available
Massage Therapists:	- If minimum hours of service requirement not met (i.e., 500 hours over 3 years), applicant must complete a refresher course
Physiotherapists:	- If minimum hours of service requirement not met (i.e., 1550 over 5 years), applicant completes a "written screen" covering work experience, learning activities or supervised work completed in time away and review of conflict of interest and regulatory issues. Based on results, Registration Committee may require interview and review of clinical skills.
Psychologists:	- If away 2 years + ➡ re-take written and oral entry tests

Case by Case Review by a Committee or by the Registrar

Audiologists/Speech Language Pathologists:	- If away 3 years + ➡ applicant may have to write examination; registrar has discretion
Certified General Accountants:	- CGAs must maintain up-to-date knowledge; applicants may be required by Assessment Board to update their skills following a review of credentials
Chartered Accountants:	- If away 5 years + ➡ completion of course(s) or passing of examination(s) may be prescribed by Council
Dental Hygienists	- Depending on time away, and what professional activities took place during that time, a refresher program may be required. Program could include mentorship and academic courses
Dental Surgeons:	- If away 3 years +, Registration Committee could require that applicant participate in assessment by the Quality Assurance Committee
Land Surveyors:	- If away 2 years + ➡ "Academic and Experience Committee" reviews case and may require applicant to write statutory component of professional examination and/or additional course work
Medical Laboratory Technologists:	- Currently, Registration Committee may require refresher course or 900 hours practice under supervision; planning to integrate currency requirement with QAP
Optometrists:	- If away less than 3years ➡ Quality Assurance Committee may require an evaluation similar to the initial licensing examination; if less 3years + ➡ Committee may require peer review at some stage
Pharmacists:	- If away 3years +➡ Registration Committee may require completion of additional training. If certified before 1975, need to complete a practice review and write entrance to practice exam
Physiotherapists:	- Subject to an assessment or work experience and ongoing professional learning from the Registration Committee if completed less than 1550 hours of active practice over 5 years; may include review of clinical skills and entry level exam
Respiratory Therapists:	- If away 2 years +, but less than 4 years ➡ Registration Committee may place limits on practice and require some supervision

Currency Requirements Integrated with Quality Assurance Program or Maintenance of Competence program	
Opticians:	- Applicants must accumulate ongoing professional learning credits or see terms and conditions applied to certificate
Nurses:	- QA program requires persons returning to the profession to maintain and demonstrate currency upon re-entry; practice review requirement in development
Social Workers:	- Applicants must accumulate ongoing professional learning credits or see terms and conditions applied to certificate

Policy in Development	
Agrologists:	- Policy not yet established
Architects:	- Members who are returning to the profession may be required to take a national examination although this has not been determined. The length of absence cut-off has not yet been determined.

No Data Available
Physicians and Surgeons:
Society of Management Accountants:
College of Midwives of Ontario:
College of Professional Engineers:

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I. Measuring Effectiveness

In general, the issue of the effectiveness of programs and approaches is considered both in the development phase of a maintenance of competence program (i.e. in the drafting of program objectives and in choosing which tools will likely be most appropriate), and once the program is implemented, in order to determine if its objectives are being met.

The Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC), created by the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991,* was given the responsibility to report on the effectiveness of each health SRP's Quality Assurance Program. A report is expected in June 2000. As part of the review, health SRPs were encouraged to collect specific data and develop their own evaluation tools and review mechanism. Many have developed programs with built-in yearly review mechanisms. Some health SRPs expressed the view that the 2000 report is perhaps premature in light of the fact that only a minority of health professions has implemented all components of their QA programs.

In their *Framework for Evaluating the Quality Assurance Programs of the Colleges of Health Professions in Ontario,* the consultants hired by HPRAC acknowledged that:

> *"While evaluation of methods are generally built into QAPs, particularly when CQI principles are followed, the evaluation literature stresses that it is important to subject QAPs to program evaluation, to determine whether programs are actually effective in improving the performance of practitioners. Increasingly, the use of outcomes to measure performance is promoted, but there remains a lack of capacity to develop outcome indicators that are clearly linked to performance of health professionals."*
> (Harry Cummings and Associates, 1997, p.iii)

A look at recent studies and taskforces on self-regulated professions suggests there is a growing body of work on this topic and widely diverging views on how to best measure competence and quality in performance. In light of the diversity that exists among professions, the effectiveness of programs aimed at maintaining competence would need to be assessed in a variety of professional settings and outcome indicators developed for various groups of professionals.

J. Variety and Suitability of Programs

In drawing a picture of what Ontario SRPs are doing in the area of maintenance of competence programs, it is difficult to ignore the variety of tools used for this purpose, and the difference in the degree of stringency applied in setting up accountability measures.

The results of the Ontario College of Teachers survey reflect the fact that ongoing competence is of acute importance for professions where the scientific body of knowledge on which professional knowledge is grounded is growing rapidly and issues of public protection, public health and safety are at play. Ontario professionals also operate in widely different contexts; some are unionized employees in the broader public sector, while others are independent practitioners paid with public funds, and others again operate in private practice with little or no direct peer supervision.

Ontario self-regulatory bodies come in a variety of sizes, relative to the number of members and amount of resources. From the larger groups such as the College of Nurses of Ontario with over 140 000 members, to the smallest, the Midwives, with 242 members, SRPs have developed a variety of programs aimed at maintaining competence. The scope and stringency of these programs often depend on what they can afford in terms of human and financial resources. They certainly do not all have the same capacity to interact directly and inexpensively with their members. For a number of SRPs, the implementation of comprehensive programs for maintaining competence had to be balanced with the need to carry out other parts of their mandates, while keeping membership fees at a level acceptable to members. The need to keep costs reasonable explains why, for example, the program components that require direct interaction with a member such as practice reviews or testing tend to involve a random number of members over a multi-year cycle, rather than all members in a given year.

Yet, in reviewing the programs put in place by the health professions, or those implemented by SRPs that were not subject to the same government-prescribed deadlines as the health professions, it is noted that there are requirements aimed at ensuring individual and professional accountability for members' ongoing competence. Even where no comprehensive programs have been implemented, the means of ensuring ongoing competence and the effectiveness of those means continue to be the subject of some debate.

K. Maintaining competence in Ontario self-regulated professions

Programs aimed at maintaining competence have different origins. Some Ontario SRPs led a nation-wide move towards maintenance of competence, while others were encouraged to take that route by changing trends in licensing practices in their respective professions. Several SRPs were created with quality assurance as part of their legislated mandate. Whatever their origins, it is clear that where programs were developed, they were based on research into effective methods of maintaining competence, and that SRPs have adapted these methods to their own professional context after much consultation with their members and stakeholders.

Appendix

Regulatory Body:	Referred to as:	Number of Members
Ontario Institute of Agrologists	Agrologists	Not Available
Ontario Association of Architects	Architects	2800**
College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario	Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists	2646*
Certified General Accountants Association	Certified General Accountants	12000**
Institute of Chartered Accountants	Chartered Accountants	27000**
College of Chiropodists of Ontario	Chiropodists	486*
College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario	Dental Hygienists	6206*
College of Dental Technologists	Dental Technologists	471*
Royal College of Dental Surgeons	Dentists	6938*
College of Dietitians of Ontario	Dietitians	2177*
Association of Ontario Land Surveyors	Land Surveyors	700**
Law Society of Upper Canada	Law Society	23827***
Society of Management Accountants	Management Accountants	16600**
College of Massage Therapists of Ontario	Massage Therapists	3569*
College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario	Medical Laboratory Technologists	7962*
College of Medical Radiation Technologists of Ontario	Medical Radiation Technologists	5464*
College of Midwives of Ontario	Midwives	242*
College of Nurses of Ontario	Nurses	140708*
College of Occupational Therapists	Occupational Therapists	3002*
College of Opticians of Ontario	Opticians	1800**
College of Optometrists of Ontario	Optometrists	1249*
Ontario College of Pharmacists	Pharmacists	9270*
College of Physicians and Surgeons	Physicians and Surgeons	26000**
College of Physiotherapists of Ontario	Physiotherapists	5144*
Professional Engineers of Ontario	Professional Engineers	60000**
College of Psychologists of Ontario	Psychologists	2478*
College of Respiratory Therapists	Respiratory Therapists	1849*
College of Certified Social Workers	Social Workers	3200**
College of Veterinarians of Ontario	Veterinarians	Not Available

Source:

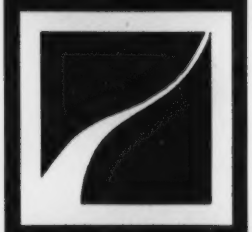
* Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges, *Annual Survey Summary*, 1998.

** Approximate number obtained from SRP staff

***Total number of employed members as per Law Society's 1998 Annual Report

Note:

The Ontario College of Teachers has a membership of 174437.



Ontario College of Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

Section B

Ensuring Competency: Survey of International Programs and Practices in the Teaching Profession

A. Teacher Testing and Professional Certification in Other Jurisdictions

The United States

The 1970's marked the beginning of a trend toward formalized testing of teachers in the United States. By the mid 1980's all but a few states reported using some form of testing in a continuing effort to ensure quality education. Although the specific purpose of this testing varied from state to state, the purpose of the process was to:

- control the entry of teacher candidates into teacher training programs
- certify successful completion of a teacher training program
- control initial certification or licensure of teachers

In December, 1998 the Council of Chief State School Officers issued a comprehensive report, *Key State Education Policies on K-12 Education: Standards, Graduation, Assessment, Teacher Licensure, Time and Attendance – A 50 State Report*. The report provides a state by state profile for work on state standards for teacher licensing, teacher assessment instruments for use in the licensing of new teachers and professional development requirements for teacher license renewal.

Thirty-one states report the use of teacher standards for licensing and 6 additional states indicate they are in the development stage. The report indicates that 28 states apply their teacher standards to all teaching fields. Twelve states reported specific fields for which teacher standards apply. Of the states using standards as the basis for the licensing process, 17 report that the standards prepared by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Standards Consortium (INTASC) provide the foundation for their work.

A written test is commonly used as part of the certification process for new teachers. Many states rely on one of the following examination formats: the Praxis I and/or Praxis II, the National Teacher Exam (NTE), the College Basic Academic Subject Exam, or another standardized test of basic skills. A few states use a state exam that is fully customized for use at this initial licensing stage.

The Council of Chief State School Officers report indicates that 38 states reported requiring a written assessment at some point in the certification and licensure of new teachers. Among the states with teacher assessments:

- *36 states assess "basic skills"*
- *27 states assess "professional knowledge of teaching"*
- *22 states assess "subject matter knowledge"*
- *A total of 28 states assess teachers with two or more of these components.*

The survey also covered state policies on teacher performance assessment. Results for 1998 show 8 states use portfolios, with four requiring the portfolio during the first or second year of teaching and several using the portfolio on completion of pre-service education. The results also showed that 13 states require classroom observation as part of the assessment process for licensure.
(Key State Education Policies on K-12 Education p. 27)

In California, for example, the CBEST (California Basic Education Skills Test) is used to assess and verify proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics in the English language. It is not a measure of teaching skills. Individuals applying for their first teaching credential are required to pass the CBEST. It is also used as a component of the admission requirements to a California Commission on Teacher Credentialing approved teacher preparation program unless the applicant already holds a valid California teaching credential for which a baccalaureate degree is required. California also provides for the administration of the CBEST to individuals who have not taught for a period of 39 months. Passing the CBEST may be a condition of employment in this circumstance.

The state of Massachusetts also requires that new teacher candidates take the Massachusetts Educator Certification Tests. A letter from the state Commissioner of Education to all persons taking the tests scheduled for 1999-2000 academic year states:

> *The Massachusetts Educator Certification Tests program was initiated by the Department of Education as part of our statewide reform initiative. The law requires candidates for initial educator certification in Massachusetts to meet several requirements, including passing a two-part test of communication and literacy skills and an additional test of the subject knowledge for the certificate area chosen by the candidate.*
> (David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education. letter not dated)

The Council of Chief State School Officers report also notes that in the 1990's states established policies that required new teachers to have a degree with an undergraduate or graduate major in their chosen teaching field. The report indicates that states are moving in this direction in order "to prevent a path to teaching through completion of a bachelor's degree with a major in education, and not in a particular subject area". (p.32)

An increasing number of states are developing state policies specific to ongoing professional learning as a requirement for teacher license renewal/recertification. These expectations are more directly linked to teacher knowledge and skills while in the job and are often established to support a state approved set of teaching standards.

The Council of Chief State School Officer's report lists the 47 states with policies defining requirements for continuing professional learning of teachers in order for teachers to be licensed by the state. The authors summarize the state requirements for teacher license renewal/recertification as follows:

> *The norm for state requirements is 6 semester credits every 5 years, which is the policy in half the states. Several states specify higher requirements – North Carolina requires 15 credits every 5 years. Oregon requires 24 quarter hours for renewal in the initial 3 years, and Rhode Island requires 9 credits every 5 years.*
>
> *Seven states require from 120 to 180 clock hours of development be completed every 5 years, while 4 states said they required continuing education units. Eight states allow for professional development choices, mostly between required credits, required units or required contact hours.*
> (Key State Education Policies on K-12 Education p. 26)

This emphasis on basing teacher certification on standards and ongoing professional development represents a shift from the 1980's and early 1990's examples of standardized teacher tests that attracted so much media attention and scrutiny from both the profession and the public. The Texas experience is one of the more highly publicized examples of a state attempt to use a written test to assess competency of experienced members of the teaching profession.

The Texas Examination of Current Administrators and Teachers (TECAT) is a basic literacy test that was administered to 202,000 educators in Texas in 1986.

A 2-year case study project examining the TECAT experience involved 10 separate data-collection studies including:

- structured interviews with key legislators and aides
- interviews with random samples of educators, personnel directors and Texas citizens
- a compilation of Select Committee and legislative records
- analysis of test results by categories of teachers
- content analysis of newspaper stories
- a survey of study materials
- participant observation at test-population workshops
- cost analysis.

(Shepard, L. Kreitzer, A & Graue, M. A Case Study of the Texas Teacher Test: Technical Report: p.5)

The study authors indicate that enormous effort went into preparing teachers to take the TECAT. Some teachers reported spending more than 100 hours using prepared resource materials and videos in preparation for the test. Test development and administration cost the Texas public over $5 million dollars for the 1986 examination period. Data illustrates that 96.7% of teachers passed the test on the first try. By the second try 99% of teachers passed the test.

And what did this test do to ensure public confidence in the quality of teaching? The authors of the study summarize their findings this way:

> *After the test, the 99% passing rate did little to assure the public that incompetent teachers had been eliminated. Half of the teachers interviewed believed that the public had been disillusioned. They felt personally embarrassed by the portrayal of their profession and they feared that teaching was now even less desirable a career choice for a young college student. Indeed, public opinion data compared over time showed greater disenchantment with teacher competency testing than with any other educational reform measure. Ironically, then, the TECAT may have had an influence exactly opposite than intended. Negative images associated with the test may discourage the brightest college students from aspiring to become public school teachers.*
>
> *The TECAT seemed so simple at first; give a test and eliminate the few teachers with indefensibly weak communication skills. The negative side to what happened involves unforeseen consequences: enormous costs, frenetic preparation and worrying about the test, demoralized teachers, and a public unimpressed by the*

> *extremely high pass rate. Although these outcomes were not intended, they may be inevitable features of a reform that hangs so much importance on a test pitched to the lowest level of performance on the lowest teaching skills.*
> (Shepard, L. et al. p.105)

It is not surprising that the state of Texas has chosen to discontinue the administration of the Texas Examination of Current Administrators and Teachers (TECAT).

Texas has embarked now on the development of new teacher certification standards and new examinations for the certification of education in Texas (EXCET). The process will involve the development of standards for all content areas of certification. The content areas will be configured by the grade placement levels of students. Rather than describe standards by coursework that must be completed, they will define what a teacher should know (knowledge) and be able to do (skills) for each content area and level. There will be three instructional "levels" comparable to Ontario "divisions": early childhood to grade 4, grades 4 to 8 and grades 8 to 12. Each set of standards will be grounded in the Texas essential knowledge and skills (TEKS), the state's required school curriculum.

Following review, draft test frameworks based on the approved standards will be developed and validated. The test contractor will develop the tests. The decision has already been made, on the advice of subject groups, that some tests will be "closed" while others will be "open-ended". The tests will cover content, pedagogy, classroom management, ethics and proficiencies.

Running parallel to the development of EXCET is a re-designed teacher appraisal system. There is an annual appraisal as a condition of employment. The annual appraisal includes assessment of the individual teachers' professional growth plan. A separate performance assessment system for beginning teachers is under development. It will be congruent with a mandatory "new teacher support system" in school districts. The appraisal systems cover all staff. Principals, for instance, undergo formal external assessment every 5 years.

Professional learning is connected to the individual teachers' professional growth plan. There is strong encouragement built into the system to engage in developmental work where the knowledge acquired may be demonstrably applied in the classroom.
Texas has established an ambitious timetable for a complete re-design of its accountability system. It will move, between 1999 and 2006, to develop standards and assessment frameworks by subject, to do job analysis surveys using practising teachers, to begin the new entry to teaching testing regime, to review the functionality and a validity of the new standards and integrate the standards into teacher preparation programs. The four phases of the program involve continuous research and extensive field validation and development.

Many states have been conducting a complete review of their processes to ensure competency in the teaching profession. Several varieties of tests are in current use, most particularly in the pre-service area of teacher education. A review of the types of tests in use in the United States suggests that written tests may be classified in three general categories. Some states use "off-the-shelf" standardized tests. The contracted agency administers the test as selected. The state has no opportunity to modify the test content.

The National Teacher Examination, offered by the Educational Testing Service, is an example of this type of test.

A variation of the "off-the-shelf" standardized tests are those that combine elements of standardized tests with some customization for a particular state. Several states, including California, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida have in the past worked in conjunction with the National Evaluation Systems, Inc. to develop this type of test. The tests include questions specific to the curriculum education policies and current priorities of the particular state. These questions are often open-ended essay format.

A state may also contract to have tests developed on a custom basis. This totally customized test format entails, a set of test questions that have been designed to match state expectations of teachers. The test includes a unique set of questions for each state developing this form of test.

The issue of teacher testing at both entry to the profession and within the profession remains a topic of research, discussion and debate. Haney (1997) undertook a comprehensive study that attempted to provide answers to the questions surrounding the testing movement. This study, and similar studies reviewed in the literature, suggests that issues related to teacher testing fall into distinct categories:

- The quality of the questions included in the actual tests has been widely criticized. (Haney et al., 1987; Shanker, 1996; Darling-Hammond, 1998)
- There is inadequate evidence to ensure that the tests meet criteria related to validity and reliability. (Haney et al.. 1987; Dybdahl et al., 1997; Rebell, in Gorth, 1985)
- The test results discriminate among teacher candidates more on the basis of race than on the basis of any independent measures of teacher quality. (Haney et al., 1987; Dybdahl et al., 1997)
- Available evidence indicates that teacher quality, and practice in other helping professions, is determined less by professional knowledge than by other less tangible aspects of personality and social skills. (Haney et al., 1987; Wise and Darling-Hammond, 1987 &1996; Anrig, 1987; Roth, 1999)
- The issues of validity and discrimination have led to legal action. (Dybdahl, 1997; Rebell in Gorth, 1985; Roth, 1996)
- Funding is a political issue - but also a reality in terms of test administration and the cost benefits in terms of outcomes. (Roth, 1996)

In summary, Haney et al. write:

> *Indeed, among the conclusions to which our review leads us is the general point that much of the new testing of teachers, at least if viewed as an instrument for improving education, is of highly doubtful merit, having little to do with teacher competence.*
> (Haney et al. p.171)

Dybdahl et al. are even more blunt in their conclusions:

> *The fact is that after more than a decade of teacher testing, research has failed to demonstrate any significant relationship between basic competency tests and other measures of program success, including success in teaching.*
> (Dybdahl et al., p.252)

In the late 1980's and early 1990's issues and concerns surfacing through the research reports and court challenges led policy makers, educators and the public to begin thinking about alternate approaches to assessing competency in the teaching profession. Wise and Leibbrand (1996) reflect on the previous 13 years of work during the 1980's and early 1990's by describing it as a piecemeal approach grounded in the past.

> *Thousands of pieces of legislation have been passed, often producing little of the intended effect. Legislators and policy makers now realize that piecemeal attempts at reform will not provide a cure for a system that was designed for America's past. They recognize that the expertise of the teacher is the most important school-based factor in determining student achievement.*
> (Wise and Leibbrand. 1996, p.202.)

Researchers, policy makers, educators and the public began to investigate performance-oriented standards and assessments to better determine what teachers know and are able to do. Others, like Wise and Leibbrand, began to envision teacher growth and development as a continuum that begins in the pre-service teacher training period and spans an entire career. Thinking about the issues related to competency in the teaching profession in this way offered a framework that could guide the creation of new standards and assessments.

Attention in the 1990's began then to shift away from the administration of tests to a more integrated and holistic approach to ensuring competency and public accountability. The focus of the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was on teacher-preparation standards to incorporate outcomes. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the accrediting organization for schools of education, reviewed its standards and process so that they reflected the changing educational context. NCATE began to lead the way in ensuring that teacher education programs reflected these new realities. The new expectations emphasize *"performance, new forms of assessment, collaboration with schools, technology and diversity – all in the context of high-quality programs and continuous program evaluation"* (Wise and Leibbrand, 1996). States began to establish partnerships with accrediting agencies, teacher groups and schools of education to initiate projects to address the area of teacher competency in a coherent fashion. Local policy makers began to understand that teacher preparation, licensure, and professional development needed to be reviewed and improved as an integrated whole, so that each part was linked and assessment strategies built on and reinforced each other through the career continuum. Policy makers began to make decisions based on the realization that changes in one area could reinforce reforms made in another area. As a result new models for ensuring competency in the teaching profession began to emerge.

An example of this new approach is the project established in New York State. The state established a Regents Task Force to undertake a comprehensive review of teacher licensure and professional certification. In July 1998, The Regents Task Force Report outlined a plan to improve and maintain the quality of teaching in New York. The plan in New York is tied very closely to the teacher education programs in the state. As of this year, all prospective teachers must pass the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations (NYSTCE) to be granted an Initial Teaching Certificate. The Task Force Report calls for a process to be initiated in 2003 that will provide for:

> *a Professional Teaching Certificate to be issued once a teacher has completed the equivalent of one year of mentored teaching and completed 3 years of satisfactory teaching experience beyond the mentored experience that will include annual professional reviews.*
> (Regents Task Force on Teaching, p. 15)

The report goes on to state:

> *All teachers receiving a professional certificate on or after September 1, 2000 will be required to successfully complete at least 175 hours of professional development every 5 years, directly related to student learning needs as identified in the School Report Card, state initiatives and implementation of New York standards and assessments to maintain their certificate in good standing.*
> (The Regents Task Force on Teaching, p.30)

In September 1999, the New York State Board of Regents approved a series of state regulations specific to teacher education program approval, profession staff development and annual performance reviews.\

The State Board of Regents describes the purpose of the professional development regulation in the following terms.

> *The purpose of the amendment is to require each school district and BOCES to have a professional development plan, which describes how they will provide all of their teachers with substantial professional development opportunities. For plans covering the time period, February 2, 2004 and thereafter, each school district or BOCES is required to describe in their plans how they will provide teachers they employ holding a professional certificate with opportunities to maintain such certificates in good standing based upon successfully completing 175 hours of professional development every five years.*
>
> *The intent is for school districts and BOCES to offer a menu of professional development opportunities to their teachers. Such opportunities may be in a variety of formats and offered by a variety of providers and includes course work paid for by the school districts or BOCES or the teacher, depending on local arrangements and how professional development offered outside the school day is collectively bargained.*

> *The amendment requires the professional development plan to be developed by September 1, 2000 and annually thereafter. It requires the plan to be developed through collaboration with a professional development team, including the superintendent of schools or district superintendent or their designates, school administrators, teachers, at least one parent and curriculum specialist, a representative of a higher education institution provided that a qualified candidate is available, and others.* (Professional Development Plans: The State Board of Regents. p.1.)

In a similar attempt to ensure competency through ongoing professional development, the New Jersey Professional Standards Board in 1999 released a draft set of state standards that will provide the basis for required professional development offered through school districts and other providers. Providers will be required to register with the state and have their programs approved to ensure compliance with state standards and other expectations.

The Chair of the New Jersey Professional Teaching Standards Board inviting feedback on the Draft Standards for the Required Professional Development for Teachers document in a letter dated October, 1999 stated:

> *One of our most important roles as New Jersey's Professional Teaching Standards Board is the development of standards to assure high quality professional development for New Jersey's teachers and educational support personnel. Over the past six months, the board has developed draft professional development standards, as mandated by the required professional development for teachers' regulations. It is our belief that the specific goals outlined in the standards will result in accomplishing the broader and more far reaching objectives of improved teaching and learning.*
> (Letter, October 20, 1999)

Massachusetts, perhaps in an attempt to alleviate the negative media attention given to its teacher testing project, announced in July 1998 a "Framework for Strengthening Massachusetts' Future Teaching Force". The plan included incentives such as a $20,000 signing bonus spread over the first few years of a teacher's career, loan forgiveness packages, full scholarships to high school students selecting teaching as a career, mentorship programs for new teachers, and funds to reimburse and reward master teachers who complete the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards program.

Initiatives such as the New York, New Jersey and recent Massachusetts program reflect a change in thinking about teacher competency. The recognition that teacher growth may be viewed as a continuum that spans a teaching career generates new models of teacher development.

Australia and New Zealand

Australia has assumed a very active role internationally through its efforts to address issues related to the quality of teaching and learning as we enter the new millennium.

The state departments of education have elected to address the issue of teacher competency through the articulation of teaching standards.

In 1998, the Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee published *A Class Act: Inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession*. The committee gathered evidence throughout Australia and found major concerns regarding teacher morale and a serious decline in the attractiveness of teaching as a career. It was the position of this national committee that "good teachers lie at the heart of student learning... the teacher is a more significant factor than any other kind of school resource". (*A Class Act*: Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, p.7)

In summary the core messages in *A Class Act* were:

- promote the professionalism of teaching
- redefine the relationship between governments and the teaching profession specific to the issue of accountability
- rethink the assumptions about how educational reform policy makes a difference to what happens in classrooms.

Highly significant to the Senate Committee was the issue of standards for the teaching profession. The Senate report promoted the view that it is the responsibility of the profession to specify the standards that apply to teaching practice. The committee also expressed the view that there was a need to define both the standards for which teachers would be accountable and those standards for which governments would assume responsibility. The key to the reform strategy proposed in *A Class Act* was a new standards-based professional development system leading to professional certification. (Ingvarson, 1999)

Standards and the role they play in Australia's efforts to ensure quality teaching are the focus of much discussion and debate through the individual states. Three states including Western Australia, Victoria and Queensland have played central roles in this discussion and debate.

In 1993, the government of the state of Victoria established the Standards Council of the Teaching Profession. The Standards Council of the Teaching Profession is a statutory body of the Victorian Government and provides advice to the Minister of Education and the Secretary of Department of Education about matters of professional standards for members of the teaching profession. Specifically the Council provides advice on:

- minimum standards of academic qualifications and teacher training for entry to teaching
- criteria for the initial appointment and probation of teachers
- professional criteria for promotion
- professional development needs
- evaluation of teacher education courses.

The Standards Council of the Teaching Profession in Victoria has recently released 2 publications: *Professional Standards for Teachers* and *Professional Standards for Teachers of Science*. The document *Professional Standards for the Teaching Profession* describes, "*what is*

expected teachers will aspire to at four different levels of their development. In the Victorian Department of Education, these levels are Beginning Teacher, Experienced Teacher, Leading Teacher Level 2 and Leading Teacher Level 3." The *Professional Standards for Teachers of Science* is also "designed to help all teachers of science deliver the best possible science education to their students".

The main purpose of both documents is to provide teachers with a model for professional growth. The use of these documents is not mandated in Victoria. Schools and teachers are encouraged to use them in a variety of contexts. Examples of these contexts might include the design of induction and mentoring programs for new teachers, leadership training programs, curriculum planning and in assessing the quality of teacher education programs.

In New Zealand, the government is currently considering the formation of an independent professional body to take over the role of setting minimum and advanced standards for the teaching profession, as well as establishing a code of ethics and holding some disciplinary powers. The proposed professional body (The New Zealand Council for Teaching) would consist of a majority of members elected from registered teachers together with appointments and elections from government, employer and community groups.

Currently, The Teacher Registration Board maintains a register of teachers and all teachers in state and private schools must be registered.

The publication, *Information for Newly Registered Teachers*, described the registration process.

> *Teacher candidates, in New Zealand, graduating from an approved program of teacher education who apply successfully for registration are provisionally registered. Already experienced teachers who have not taught in New Zealand for two out of the last five years are registered either provisionally or subject to confirmation. All overseas teachers, no matter how experienced, are registered either provisionally or subject to confirmation. Both groups work towards full registration with the support of other fully registered teachers. This process of supervised induction, which includes an advice and guidance program, is generally a very positive experience for beginning teachers.*
> (Information for Newly Registered Teachers p.2)

For newly registered teachers there are four conditions that must be met prior to full registration. The conditions include:

- employment as a teacher in New Zealand in the general education system or in institutions approved by The Teacher Registration Board
- participation in an appropriate advice and guidance program for the period under the supervision of a fully registered teacher
- an appraisal by a supervising teacher in accordance with the satisfactory teacher dimensions developed by The Teacher Registration Board
- holding a current practising certificate.
  (Information for Newly Registered Teachers p.3)

The 2 year induction period into the profession and leading to full registration requires that every new teacher engage in an advice and guidance program supervised by a teacher who is already registered. Responsibilities of the role of supervising teacher include:

- welcoming the beginning teacher as a valued colleague with fresh and special skills to offer
- negotiating with the beginning teacher an advice and guidance program that meets his/her own learning needs and is appropriate and realistic for the learning centre
- making sure that the beginning teacher has access to any up to date schemes of work, planning, or administrative guidelines
- helping the beginning teacher make contact with any relevant subject associations or other professional organizations
- arranging for the beginning teacher to make frequent visits to observe their teaching
- giving frequent feedback on the teaching you observe, and on the progress relating to all the satisfactory teacher dimensions
- incorporating the supervising teacher role into your own professional development (Information for Newly Registered Teachers p.12)

Members of the Teacher Registration Board are required to renew their practising certificate every three years. This renewal process requires affirmation from the member's principal, senior teacher, or employer that the member is still "satisfactory" in accordance with the Teacher Registration Board "satisfactory teacher dimensions".

Satisfactory teaching experience means:

- being employed in New Zealand during at least 2 of the previous 5 years, and
- in the general education system or an institution in New Zealand approved by the Teacher Registration Board for this purpose, and
- as a teacher (or principal) or in a position seen by the Teacher Registration Board as equivalent to a teacher, and
- satisfactorily completed.

Satisfactorily completed means:

- the teaching must be at a standard determined by the Registration Board to be a satisfactory standard, appropriate to the level of experience and responsibilities of the teacher, and
- the teacher is actively involved in professional development, and
- there are no further matters that the Registration Board needs to be satisfied about.

(A Satisfactory Teacher and Renewing a Practising Certificate p.10-11)

The teacher dimensions approved by the Teacher Registration Board to define a satisfactory standard include a series of statements specific to 5 areas. These areas include Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, Teaching, Professional Relationships and Professional Leadership.

Both Australia and New Zealand have chosen to address the issue of teacher competence through standards for the teaching profession. An Australian leader in the field of teacher education sums up the approach this way: *"The standards-guided system aims to provide teachers with more powerful incentives for professional development, as teachers"*. (Ingvarson, 1999)

England, Wales and Scotland

The focus in England and Wales is also on standards. Teachers in England and Wales must obtain Qualified Teacher Status to teach in what is termed a "maintained" school. Qualified Teacher Status is awarded by successfully completing a course of initial teacher training at an accredited institution in England or Wales. Successful completion of a course or program of initial teacher training must involve the assessment of all teacher candidates with respect to their ability to achieve all standards specified. The standards are delineated in a detailed document. This document outlines specific standards for secondary specialist subjects, primary subjects, and additional standards relating to early years. Topics such as planning, teaching, class management, assessment recording and reporting are addressed.

The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) has recently undertaken the task of developing updated training curriculum and standards for new teachers (Qualified Teacher Status), subject leaders, special education needs co-ordinators and head teachers. The Chief Executive Officer of the TTA made the following statement in her letter inviting feedback on the draft documents.

> *I am pleased to invite views on four consultation documents which aim to guarantee, for all those training to be teachers, high quality professional preparation which equips them with the professional and subject knowledge, understanding and skills they need to become effective teachers.*
> (Letter February 18, 1997)

The National Standards outlined by the TTA in the documents set out expectations for educators at key points in the profession. The National Standards were designed as part of the national efforts to enhance student achievement, provide for recognition of teachers' expertise and achievements. The standards were also prepared to assist providers with the development and implementation of high quality programs.

The induction program for new teachers is a one year program provided at the school level and based on a *Career Entry Profile*. The profile is designed to provide information about new teachers' strengths and priorities for their professional learning. This professional learning correlates with the new standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status.

Preliminary work has begun on the development of computer based tests for teacher candidates in the areas of literacy and numeracy and are planned to be included in the final assessment data to determine Qualified Teacher Status.

The Scottish Office Education Department released a list of teacher competencies in 1993. These competencies, or standards, form the basis of the approved teacher education programs in Scotland. The Education Department states in the foreword to the document, *Teacher Competences (sic)*, that these competencies "will be expected in future of beginning teachers". The Education Office statement also indicates that "the competences (sic) offer a basis of skills and qualities which could be further developed during the probation period and after". The Education Department's document Teacher Competences, was

released to the teaching profession in Scotland along with a publication prepared by the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTC) titled *Assessing Probationers*.

Teachers who are new graduates from teacher education programs in Scotland must be assessed as probationary teachers prior to receiving full registration in the General Teaching Council of Scotland. The GTC is responsible for the management of the probation process monitoring of probationary teachers. Head teachers report to the GTC on the progress of probationary teachers at the end of the first probationary year and at the conclusion of the probationary period. A standardized report form is used by the head teacher to report in the probationary teacher at the end of two years and to make a final recommendation regarding full registration in the General Teaching Council of Scotland. The report includes comments related to:

- competence in curricular areas and subjects
- class organization, management and control
- conscientiousness
- relationships with pupils, colleagues and other staff members
- additional relevant comments

France

In France, both pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development are the responsibility of *Instituts Universitaires de Formation des Maîtres* (IUFM), or teacher training universities. Pre-service programs last two years, after a *license*, which is the equivalent of an undergraduate degree. The first year focuses on preparation for the competitive examinations, and consists of training in the actual discipline(s), practicums in schools, specialized training and practicum accompaniment. The second year is for candidates who have successfully passed the examination, and alternates theoretical and practical training.

There are seven different examinations for the teaching profession. Candidates are advised to select *license* programs that correspond to the disciplines covered in the examination to increase their chances of being admitted to the IUFM of their choice. The examination consists of written eligibility tests on a given discipline, and oral eligibility tests consisting of an *épreuve sur dossier* that includes a paper and an interview. The oral *épreuve sur dossier* gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate:

- That they are familiar with the teaching content and programs of the discipline(s) they are to teach
- That they have given thought to the objectives and development of the disciplines
- That they possess oral, analytical, synthetic and communications abilities
- That they are familiar with the organization and operation of a school.

After passing the examination, candidates receive a trainee teacher's salary. During the practicum year, they take a one-year professional education program corresponding to the second year of the IUFM. At the end of the second year, they receive a professional school teacher's diploma.
A reference document lists the professional skills that aspiring teachers must acquire and

consolidate during the training period. In other words, this is a reference document for the end of the pre-service education program which establishes the minimum that may be required of a beginner teacher. These skills are perfected, manifested and enhanced with the practice of the profession and the support of in-service education. They fall into four main areas: the disciplines being taught; learning situations; classroom management; and recognition of student diversity, educational responsibility and professional ethics. Teacher training clarifies the concepts, knowledge and skills, processes and key tools that trainee teachers must master or incorporate as part of their training. Pre-service teacher education in the IUFMs is based on the idea that there is no real professionalization without a constant striving to acquire new skills, upgrade and update knowledge and challenge habits and procedures.

Quebec

In the early 1990s, Quebec conducted an exhaustive analysis of the education system with the aim of renewing and upgrading the teaching profession through quality training. The project report document titled: *The Challenge of Teaching Today and Tomorrow*, and published by the Government of Quebec defines the project parameters in the following way:

> *The challenge of teaching today and tomorrow is one that calls for the renewal of the teaching profession and for greater appreciation and recognition of teachers' work. The courses of action suggested here focus on three themes:*
>
> - *Autonomy and responsibility*
> - *Teacher training*
> - *Entry into the profession and career prospects*
>
> (Government of Quebec, 1993, p. 6)

The project proposed structures and methods for fostering the exchange of ideas among teachers and providing for teacher participation in school and board decisions. It struck a teacher training orientation committee *(Comité d'orientation de la formation du personnel enseignant)* with a mandate to advise the Minister on all matters related to teacher training, and a committee for the certification of teacher training programs *(Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement)* that recommends teacher training programs to the Minister for certification.

The renewal of teacher education through quality training promotes more stringent admission criteria, more time for practice teaching and a more even balance of preparation in the subject matters and training in the psychopedagogical and social aspects of education. In addition, it proposes more rigorous language requirements (both written and oral) and more extensive general knowledge for candidates, an adequate system for professional integration and a clear definition of the knowledge and skills expected of future teachers.

The 1993 Quebec report also identified the need to support new teachers entering the profession. The report called for a co-operative effort on the part of the Ministry, employers and the teacher unions to address needed reforms during the induction period for new teachers.

Pre-service teacher education is the responsibility of the universities. Teacher training programs require a *diplôme d'études collégiales* (DEC), followed by four years of theoretical and practical training. The practicum is 25 weeks long: three weeks in each of the first three years and 16 weeks in the final year. The program leads to a university degree: the *baccalauréat d'enseignement secondaire* (A degree leading to a teaching certificate enabling a person to teach grades 7 to 11 and issued in two subject areas), the *baccalauréat d'éducation au préscolaire et d'enseignement au primaire* (*1er cycle et 2e cycle*) and the *baccalauréat d'enseignement en adaptation scolaire*. Upon request, graduates are awarded a teaching certificate. This is the only legal, permanent accreditation for teaching in Quebec.

Professional development has been the subject of in-depth study by the *Conseil supérieur de l'éducation* which proposes professional development that is integrated with professional activities and strikes an appropriate balance between knowledge of the subject areas, psychopedagogical knowledge and skills and familiarity with new social realities. Professional development is one of the primary responsibilities of the school boards and schools. It draws on peer expertise, is geared to teachers' needs and is offered as close as possible to the school. It is a means of maintaining or improving teaching skills. The *Conseil supérieur de l'éducation* recommends that evaluation be institutional, formative and participatory, and that it be carried out with professional development needs in mind.

As a final aid to professional growth, the Ministry of Education proposes reviewing the probation system with mechanisms to support new teachers during their first few years of teaching.

One of the underlying themes in the proposals for the renewal and recognition of the teaching profession in Quebec has been the premise that the work must involve the active participation of all partners in the educational system.

> *This project is possible only if the schools and school boards, the union and the universities play an active role in the establishment of local and provincial plans to achieve the pursued goal. That is how they should interpret the many calls for collaboration and concerted action that are made throughout this document. Co-operation is the surest way of implementing all of the courses of action in a coherent and complementary manner.*
> (Government of Quebec, 1993, p. 17)

Alberta

A new Alberta provincial *Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy* was approved in 1998. The document specifies:

> *School authorities, early childhood education service operators, superintendents, principals and teachers must work together to achieve the quality teaching standard. All teachers are expected to practice consistently in keeping with the standard.*
> (Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy, p. 1)

The Teaching Quality Standard is outlined in Ministerial Order #016/97. The Ministerial Order begins with the statement that the Teaching Quality Standard shall *"apply to teacher certification, professional development, supervision and evaluation, and which is supported by descriptors of selected knowledge, skills and attributes appropriate to teachers at different stages of their careers"*. The document continues to delineate the specific descriptors of the knowledge, skills and attributes for interim certification and permanent certification.

In Alberta, the stages of a teaching career, as defined in legislation, include an Interim Professional Certificate granted to applicants who complete an Education degree or a degree other than education and complete a basic professional teacher education program that is approved by the Minister. The second stage is a Permanent Professional Certificate, granted to applicants who complete 2 successful years of teaching.

A third ongoing requirement for certification is now necessary. In 1998, the requirements for the Annual Professional Growth Plan came into effect. The *Teacher Growth, Supervision, and Evaluation Policy* requires that teachers complete during each school year an annual teacher professional growth plan. The plan is prepared by the individual teacher in the context of the employment setting. The plan must:

- *reflect the goals and objectives based on an assessment of learning needs by the individual teacher*
- *show a demonstrable relationship to the teaching quality standard*
- *take into consideration the education plans of the school, the school authority and the Government, or the program statement of an Early Childhood Services operator.*

(Teacher Growth, Supervision, and Evaluation Policy, p.2)

The requirement that every teacher develop and maintain an Annual Professional Growth Plan is a provincially legislated requirement. However, the format to be used for the professional growth plan is established by the principal in the local school setting. The principal may request that a committee of teaching colleagues assist individual teachers in the preparation and review of their personal growth plans. Sharing the knowledge and skills acquired through the experiences referenced in the growth plan with other colleagues is an expectation for all teachers.

The Annual Professional Growth Plan is not linked to the ongoing performance review or evaluation of teachers. A senior official with the Alberta Department of Education, during a telephone interview regarding the new Alberta policy, stressed that the Annual Growth Plan was included as part of the provincially mandated *Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy* but that it was not "tied to the process of teacher evaluation". She did indicate that there was provision for disciplinary action for teachers who refused to comply with the requirement to prepare a plan. She was not aware of any such action being taken at this time. The Department of Education will be assessing aspects of the implementation the legislation, only introduced at the local school level in September 1999, in the future.

The Alberta initiatives related to both the development of the Teaching Quality Standards and the Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy were developed through the involvement of Alberta Education and the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards. The Council included representatives from stakeholder groups including the Alberta Teachers'

Association (ATA). These groups worked collaboratively to address the broad issue of accountability in education. The Alberta Teachers' Association currently offers a workshop to assist teachers develop and implement their annual professional teacher growth plan. The Alberta Teachers' Association also posts development guidelines and other related information on its web site.

B. Issues and Complexities: Teaching Standards, Licensure, and Certification.

The examples of teacher testing and professional certification described in the previous section of this paper serve to illustrate the diversity of purposes and approaches to ensuring competency in the profession. Some jurisdictions focus on teacher education programs based on teaching standards. Some jurisdictions administer basic skills tests during the recruitment stage prior to teacher candidates actually entering a faculty of education. Some administer tests at the exit phase of a teacher education program. Some administer subject specific tests during a teacher education program. Some licensing bodies require successful completion of a test at the licensing stage. A few states in the United States initiated and then abandoned written tests for experienced teachers. Some organizations assess individual teacher competency on request and for a fee. Some jurisdictions are implementing expectations for ongoing professional learning throughout a teaching career. The purposes vary with the contexts. The descriptions of processes and content vary. The impacts on the profession and on public perceptions vary.

Why do these variations exist? What drives the attention paid to teacher competency? One underlying premise that seems to have universal agreement is that teachers are central to the quality of student learning. A second is that teaching is a highly complex and demanding activity. A third underlying assumption is that the public has a right to expect a quality education system with quality teachers. As long as education depends on the children and tax dollars of the public, this attention to accountability will continue. It is the debate surrounding the way in which a jurisdiction defines what constitutes a "quality education system" and what processes it puts in place to ensure that "quality teachers" support student learning that is a study in contrasts. Central to this debate is the word "standards".

Why Standards?

Standards, in whatever form they take, are part of the concept of accountability. The standards prepared by the Australian Standards Council of the Teaching Profession might be best described as direction or momentum standards. The written tests prepared by the National Testing Service or Praxis might be described as performance level standards. The New Zealand Teacher Registration Board standards connote identity, priorities and core values.

The fundamental decisions a jurisdiction makes regarding teaching standards will be the foundation for other decisions such as the policies and practices for recruitment, screening, teacher education programs, licensure, and professional certification.

> *It is important to know the role of standards in the profession. In many respects, standards define the profession. They set the gateways that determine who shall and shall not enter. They provide the parameters of the existence of a profession. The future of a profession depends to a large extent on the consent of the public it serves, particularly in a public profession. For the public to understand how standards function and the degree to which their public interests are protected, the standards must be visible and hold accountable those who practice and those who prepare the practitioners. This builds public trust and confidence in the profession through the vehicle of standards. In effect, standards must be accepted as a necessary part of the profession.*
> (Roth, 1996, p.245)

The Senate Committee report to the Australian parliament titled *A Class Act* quotes Ingvarson in the chapter titled "Taking Teaching Seriously":

> *Without standards, a professional body is defenseless. A demonstrated ability to articulate standards for high quality practice is an essential credential if a professional body wishes to be taken seriously by the public and policy makers. When placed on the table in forums with policy makers about reform and accountability, established professional standards are hard to ignore.*
> (Ingvarson, Lawrence 1995,p.107 as quoted in *A Class Act*, 1998)

This brief discussion of standards leads to questions relevant to the issue of teacher testing, licensure and professional certification. How can standards help ensure that qualified people enter the profession? What qualifications should be required to enter the profession? What should form the basis of the knowledge, skills and values that are inherent to teacher education programs? On what basis should teacher candidates be assessed? What should be the basis for ongoing professional learning in the profession?

Many groups, organizations and institutions will influence the development of standards. Members of the profession, the public, the teacher federations, the trustee organizations, the principal councils, the faculties of education, the government policy-makers, parent organizations, teacher employers as well as special interest groups will all want a stake in the decision-making process.

Licensure and Certification

Licensure, as a function of a regulating authority, is intended to protect and promote the public good. In New Zealand it is the Teacher Registration Board, a government agency. In the United States it is the state Department of Education or Board of Teacher Registration. As self-regulatory bodies, both the General Teaching Council of Scotland and the Ontario College of Teachers assume this responsibility. Each regulating body will determine the criteria for issuing a licence to teach. No matter what assessment instruments or combination of processes are selected, the public must be assured of the qualifications and quality of the individuals who end up teaching in schools.

In most states in the United States one of the instruments used as part of the initial licensing criteria for new teachers is some form of modified standardized test with an open-ended component. A few states such as California, Texas and Massachusetts have experimented with fully customized tests. Pecheone, Tomala and Forgione (1986) writing in *Testing for Teacher Certification* published by the National Evaluation Systems Inc. claim: *"Competency examinations, if carefully developed and validated, can be useful measures of the academic knowledge of prospective teachers".*
(Pecheone, Tomala, and Forgione, 1986, p.104)

The authors proceed to discuss the merits and disadvantages of the use of standardized and customized tests. In highlighting the advantages of a standardized test the writers point out that through the use of standardized tests:

- *the state realizes an economy of both cost and effort*
- *test administration and test security systems may already be in place*
- *availability of normative information on a standardized test may be useful to the state.*

Advantages of modified standardized tests and fully customized tests, they write, include:

- *the match between state objectives and test items can be carefully controlled by using well-conceived test development practices*
- *test development usually provides greater flexibility in designing the testing program*
- *the method of assessment can be completely determined by the state*
- *test security and administration are controlled by the state.*

(Pecheone, Tamala and Forgione, 1986, pp.104-106)

This comparison of issues related to the use of a standardized test, modified standardized tests and fully customized tests is based on the assumption that success on these tests correlates with effective teaching. These authors do not address the fundamental issues regarding the extent to which either form of examination can ensure competency or lead to more effective teaching.

At the very best the use of testing for the certification of new teachers might be described as providing "limited information". Haney et al., following an extensive review of the research on basic competency tests made the following observations:

> *Indeed, among the conclusion to which our review leads us is the general point that much of the testing of teachers, at least if viewed as an instrument for improving education, is of highly doubtful merit, having little to do with teacher competence.*
> (Haney et al., 1987, p.171)

Dybdahl et al. in a report of a study that examined the relationship between the PPST (Pre-Professional Skills Test) and the four outcomes of the program success for teacher education students cite similar issues of concerns related to the predictive validity.

> *This study and related research suggest that educators need to reconsider their rationale and policies regarding basic competency testing for teachers. The fact is that after a decade of teacher testing, research has failed to demonstrate any significant relationship between basic competency tests and other measures of program success, including success in teaching.*
> (Dybdahl et al., 1997, p.252)

Teacher tests, researchers also propose, fail to address the complexities of teaching. A consensus on what defines teacher competence is elusive, if not impossible, to reach. There is more to teaching than a knowledge base. There is the ability to convey knowledge, to create environments where students can learn and support learners in the process of learning. Linda Darling-Hammond reminds us of the challenges in trying to measure these qualities through a standardized test. *"No standardized test that I know of can accurately measure human qualities such as dedication, caring perseverance, sensitivity, and integrity."* (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p.194)

The impact of teacher testing on the demographics of the teacher force has been a second consideration. There is little question that in the process of determining cutoff scores during the introductory years of the testing movement in the United States had an impact on the entry of minority candidates to the teaching profession.

> *The requirement that candidates score above a prespecified cutoff point on a standardized multiple-choice test, such as the NTE score, is also ill advised. The "core battery" of the NTE includes multiple-choice tests of communication skills, general knowledge, and professional knowledge. The most evident consequence of requiring of specified minimum NTE score is that it dramatically reduces the number of college graduates from minority groups who obtain teaching licenses.* (Murnane, 1991, p. 138)

The issues relating to establishing appropriate cutoff scores are both problematic and controversial. Teaching is a profession that provides for few definitive answers. *"Recent research"*, Murnane states, *"has shown that the right answer to almost all questions about how an effective teacher should respond in a particular classroom situation is - It depends"*. (Murnane, 1991, p. 138)

Designing and implementing teacher testing is an expensive proposition. The Texas taxpayers spent $5 million for one year of test administration in 1986. The state of Texas allocated $350,000 for the development of a reading test and now allocates $200,000 for the development of each subject specific test for assessing teaching competency in a particular curriculum area. Without sufficient financial resources to implement policies and processes to ensure teacher competence, the effectiveness will be limited. An important policy issue for any testing program will be is whether or not the costs of the information obtained are justified by the benefits.

Legal cases, arising out of the teacher testing milieu, are well-documented in the United States. The cases have been focused in 5 areas:

- *the arbitrary and capricious development or implementation of a test or employee selection procedure*
- *the statistical and conceptual validity of a test or procedure*
- *the adverse or disproportionate impact of a testing program or selection procedure on a "protected group"*
- *the relevancy of a test or procedure to the identified requirements of the job*
- *the use of tests or selection procedures to violate an individual's or group's civil rights*

(McDonough and Wolf, 1988, p.37)

McDonough and Wolf (1988) acknowledge that the presence of the courts brought about much constructive action. They report that psychometricians have worked to resolve both technical and social problems associated with testing. Minority groups participated in both test construction and test interpretation.

Haney et al. (1987) concluded that the process of administering basic competency tests for would-be teachers makes little sense in light of the available evidence for the following reasons:

- *the quality of the questions of the tests has been widely criticized*
- *there is inadequate validity evidence to support the use of such tests*
- *available evidence indicates that teacher quality, and practice in the helping professions is determined less by professional knowledge than by other less tangible aspects of personality and social skills*
- *the way in which tests are being used with statewide cut-scores is discriminating among teacher candidates more on the basis of race than on the basis of any independent measures of teacher quality*
- *the history of teacher testing in America clearly warns us against over-reliance on examinations as a primary means of selecting teachers.*
  (Haney et al., 1987, p.227)

It is not surprising that in the late 1980's and early 1990's jurisdictions in the United States began to take a more serious look at the issue of teacher testing. Many members of the profession, the research community and the public began to ask serious questions about the tests and the testing process.

The debate that surrounds testing for licensure requirements remains. Even though relevance, validity, and legal issues continue to be a focus for concern most states in the United States retain a written test or tests as part of the initial teacher licensure requirement. Clearly there must be more than a professional rationale that underlies the decision-making process. *Licensing in other professions would hardly be characterized by the same type of rhetoric. Teaching is in the public service domain, and thus the dialogue moves out of the professional into the political arena.*
(Roth, 1996, p. 252)

Professional Certification

Much of the early literature on teacher competency appears to use the words "licensure" and "certification" interchangeably. It is commonly understood in the Ontario context that this is the case. The research indicates that the term "professional certification" is taking on a different meaning, that is, to describe the policies and procedures to ensure competency once a teacher is licensed to teach. The question of how a member of the teaching profession should be held accountable for continuing competency beyond that required for licensure is also the centre of much discussion and debate.

In the United States, many states have moved to a performance-based assessment particularly for beginning teachers. These performance-based examinations deal with both subject expertise and knowledge of pedagogical theory. A number of states have implemented an evaluation system for beginning teachers. Several states use the Praxis

series of tests administered through the Educational Testing Services, a private company. The Praxis I series, the Pre-Professional Skills Tests, deal with basic academic skills and is used as part of the licensing process. The Praxis II series of tests assesses subject matter knowledge. The Praxis III series may be used with practising teachers. It has three components. These include a framework of knowledge and skills for beginning teachers, a variety of instruments such as classroom observation schedules and class profiles, and a form to analyze and score teaching performance.

Another organization, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was created in 1987 to establish standards for accomplished teachers. Unlike state-mandated processes, the NBPTS is a national voluntary system used to assess and certify teachers. The NBPTS now has over 40 published statements of standards and expectations for teachers in a variety of subjects and levels. The NBPTS has also established a process for the assessment of school administrators.

The NBPTS began its process of certifying teachers in 1994. At the end of the 1998/99 school year, a senior staff person from the NBPTS reported during a telephone interview, that the organization had certified 4,803 teachers between 1994 and 1999. When asked about the budget for an operating year the official responded that for the current year the operating budget was approximately 48 million dollars.

The representative from NBPTS indicated that the NBPTS obtained their revenue from four sources. The US Congress, in the current year, has provided 16 ½ million dollars for research and development. The Congress has also provided an additional 2 ½ million dollars to be used to provide fee subsidies for teacher candidates who apply to the NBPTS for certification. This funding is equitably distributed across all states on a percentage basis.

A second source of funding is the administration fee required to engage in the certification process. The current fee is $2,000 per teacher. This fee will increase to $2,300 next year. The official from the NBPTS indicated that in almost all cases the fee was paid for by a "third party". The third party was identified as most often being the state legislature or other employing authority. He stressed that it was seen by employing authorities to be very positive to be able to report that there were significant numbers of NBPTS certified teachers on staff. The organization now sees an increase in the number of teachers applying to undergo the certification process. He expected that in the year 2001 between 12,000 and 15,000 teachers would apply.

A third funding source, reported to be substantive by the NBPTS representative, is the corporate sector. The Proctor and Gamble Company was cited as being a current contributor of significance.

Foundation money, as the fourth source, was particularly important in the first few years of development. Large grants were made available to the NBPTS as "seed money". The foundation grants, the NBPTS representative reported, have now declined as other sources of revenue have become available.

The NBPTS assessment process involves the applicant preparing a portfolio of teaching accomplishments and contributions and a series of exercises to be completed at a NBPTS assessment centre. The assessment centre component consists of structured interviews, simulations and an examination of the teacher's knowledge of subject content and pedagogy.

The 1998 Australian Senate Committee report, *A Class Act*, addresses the issue of competency through ongoing professional development in Chapter 7. The Committee included in its final list of recommendations the development of "*induction programs nationally and guidelines to assist schools and governments and non-government systems in implementing them*". (Recommendation 15)

On the basis of the evidence presented to the Senate Committee, the Committee also recommended the creation of a National Professional Development Program. (Recommendation 16) Based on the Committee review of the literature on effective professional development and its observation of examples of best practice throughout the Commonwealth of Australia, the Committee articulated a vision of successful professional development programs.

These programs would incorporate a number of the following features:

- *teachers have significant input in all aspects of the program*
- *each component is part of a well structured, long term, comprehensive program*
- *programs link university education departments, teachers and (where appropriate) other interested parties including parents, community members and non teaching staff*
- *programs include evaluation, feedback, follow up and modification as appropriate*
- *the costs of professional development are shared between governments (Commonwealth and State) schools and participants*
- *courses are accredited where feasible, and/or otherwise recognized in professional teaching career structures*
- *strong links are established between pre-service, induction and continuing professional development*
- *courses meet national standards.*

(*A Class Act*, Chapter 7B p.11)

The Senate Committee also recommended that professional development providers and courses be accredited by a national body (Recommendation 17) and that teachers' participation in professional development be a prerequisite for their continued registration, or for re-registration. (Recommendation 18)

The approaches to ongoing professional certification highlighted here serve to illustrate a number of approaches to ensuring ongoing competency in the teaching profession. This concern is not unique to the teaching profession. Recognition of the need for professionals to continue learning throughout their careers is an accepted assumption for all professions.

In 1994, Queeney and English undertook a study of mandatory continuing education in a range of professions in the United States. The study was sponsored by the Washington D.C. based Center on Education and Training and Improvement. They write:

> *Standards delineating expectations for each of the aspects of a continuing education program can have a major impact on the quality of education offered. Standards that are sufficiently high to force thoughtful program developments can encourage elevation of the quality of continuing education across professions, heightening the likelihood that participation in educational activities will contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of practitioner competence.*
> (Queeney and English, 1994, p.24)

They see the challenge for professions to be the identification and implementation of effective professional learning opportunities that build capacity in the membership of the profession. *It is time for adult and continuing educators to move beyond the mandatory continuing education debate and rise to the challenge of providing practice-oriented continuing professional education of the highest quality.* (Queeney and English, 1994, p.37)
The debate surrounding appropriate measures for ongoing professional certification continues. Different jurisdictions have adapted different measures to address different needs and expectations. Policies and practices that will absolutely guarantee competency in a profession in any circumstance simply do not exist. There is no Holy Grail in the world of ongoing professional certification.

What does appear to be evident is the need for an integrated approach to teacher education and development that begins in the recruitment for entry to faculties of education, the pre-service teacher education period, and continues through induction and is ongoing during the profession.

Linda Darling-Hammond summarizes the report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future this way:

> *The Commission urges a complete overhaul in the systems of teacher preparation and professional development to ensure that they reflect current knowledge and practice. This redesign should create a continuum of teacher learning based on compatible standards that operate from recruitment and pre-service education through licensing, hiring and induction into the profession, to advanced certification and ongoing professional development.*
> (Darling-Hammond, 1996,p.196)

The Commission identified several changes specific to teacher preparation and professional learning that were deemed to be essential. The Commission made the following recommendations:

- *Organize teacher education and professional development around standards for students and teachers.*
- *Institute extended, graduate-level teacher-preparation programs that provide year long internships in a professional development school.*
- *Create and fund mentoring programs for beginning teachers that provide support and evaluate teaching skills.*
- *Create stable, high-quality sources of professional development-then allocate 1% of state and local spending to support them, along with additional matching funds to school districts.*

- *Organize new sources of professional development such as teacher academies, school-university partnerships, and learning networks that transcend school boundaries.*
- *Make professional development an ongoing part of teachers' daily work through joint planning, study groups, peer coaching, and research.*

(Report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. Summary Report. 1996, p. 20)

C. An Integrated Approach to Ensuring Competency in the Teaching Profession

The continuum of teacher learning envisioned by Linda Darling-Hammond, the Australian Senate Committee report and others calls for a framework for professional learning that is based on a consistent set of principles, purposes and standards. This framework provides for an integrated approach to ensuring competency in the teaching profession. The framework consists of separate and distinct phases marking various stages throughout a teaching career.

However, to be most effective, the continuum must be based on a common set of principles, purposes and standards. These elements should form the basis of a coherent and integrated system. Like all systems, when functioning effectively, it creates a whole that is greater than the sum of its individual parts. With standards as the central focus, the framework has the potential to generate systemic synergy. They provide a sense of direction, a common understanding that would allow for the alignment of policies, procedures and individuals within the system.

All elements in the system would have the potential to reinforce and build upon each other throughout the stages of a teaching career. Roth (1996) proposes a "standards-capacity model" that provides for a systemic approach to ensuring competency. His image includes three components: standards, assessment and what he terms, capacity building.

Describing the role of standards in this model, Roth writes:

> *Standards alone cannot constitute a system, and this is a shortcoming in much of the standards movement. Standards are not the core of the model: they represent the vision and provide a conception of teacher and teaching. They are part of the accountability factor in the system because programs are held accountable for the outcomes or elements of the standards. Standards also guide program design.*
> (Roth, 1996, p.269)

Roth believes that the assessment of the teacher education programs offered by faculties of education is an integral part of the standards-capacity model. He sees assessment as the way in which achievement of the standards can be measured. Assessment, he believes, will reflect to what degree teacher education programs are able to prepare individuals to

meet the standards. The assessment processes at faculties will also highlight components of teacher education programs that are problematic and where modifications and improvements are necessary.

Capacity, Roth describes as the ability of a teacher education program to meet the standards. Capacity would include program resources, design, implementation and evaluation factors.

This standards-capacity model, to be most effective must be applied through the teacher education continuum. This continuum, in broad terms, Roth proposes would include pre-service, induction and advanced certification. Roth describes the inter-relationship of the components of the model and the continuum of teacher education. *The linkage among standards, assessment and capacity, as well as the sequence across the continuum, creates mutually supportive elements and a total system.* (Roth, 1996, p. 270).

Roth, like the Australian Standards Council of the Teaching Profession, proposes that the standards should describe the increasing complexities of teacher development from pre-service, through induction and throughout advanced certification during a teaching career. The sequence of assessment should parallel the increasing complex image of the standards at each stage. Similarly the capacity required to prepare teachers for each stage of the continuum should also be sequenced. A pre-service teacher education program should not be identical to a program offered for advanced certification.

Roth's notion of a systemic approach to teacher competency is not unique. In 1992 the Scottish Education Department issued a report outlining *"a comprehensive approach which is predicated on the assertion that staff development has to be approached in a systematic way to be successful"*. Earlier, in 1989, the Scottish Secretary of State in a consultation paper suggested that there should be national guidelines for staff development and appraisal, with appraisal being defined as the assessment of the performance of individual teachers. The guidelines as they were later established were designed to:

> *Ensure a planned and systematic approach to staff development and appraisal and a degree of consistency across the country. The approach adopted recognizes that there are a number of purposes that can be seen in an individual appraisal system operating within the broader context of staff development. These are:*
>
> - *Motivation and communication, including the opportunity to discuss the aims and objectives of current school policies and practices and to influence future developments.*
> - *Review, evaluation and development of professional performance, including formal evaluation of all aspects of an individual's contribution to the team. Managers explore how performance in some aspect of the individual's work could be enhanced and what steps could help achieve this.*
> - *Identification of personal staff development needs, providing an opportunity to identify personal development needs and to discuss how they can be met.*
> - *Career review, giving advice and support in relation to career development. It both indicates suitability for future promotion and identifies performance below acceptable standards.*
>
> (National Guidelines for Staff Development and Appraisal as quoted in Centre for Educational Research and Innovation. (1994) Quality in Teaching. p. 82)

In somewhat similar fashion, the 1996 Report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future uses the metaphor of the three-legged stool to describe a systematic approach to ensuring teacher quality. The three-legged stool is described this way:

> *The three-legged stool of quality assurance-teacher education program accreditation, initial teacher licensing, and advanced professional certification is becoming more sturdy as a continuum of standards has been developed to guide teacher learning across the career. When these standards have been enacted in policy, teacher preparation and professional development should be focused on a set of shared knowledge, skills and commitments.* (Report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future: Summary Report p. 19)

A research study commissioned by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) identified three sources of quality in teaching. Initiatives to improve teacher quality the report states *"spring from individuals, individual schools and external policies enacted by local, regional, or national authorities"*. The report also identifies the challenge as *"how to arrange these initiatives to complement and reinforce one another, not conflict and compete"*. The authors of the study report go on to suggest the policy implications for addressing each of the sources of teacher quality.

> *Source 1: the individual teacher quality springs from individual teachers' motivations and capacities.*
>
> *To the extent that teacher quality rests on individual initiative and skill, the policy implications include:*
>
> - *rigorous selection procedures which admit only high-quality entrants to the profession;*
> - *Pre-service teacher education that is short, challenging, and as much as possible practice-based;*
> - *a relatively high level of financial remuneration;*
> - *career progression that rewards excellence in teaching and keeps good teachers in the classroom;*
> - *an array of challenging professional development opportunities that allow individual choice;*
> - *a school organization that fosters individual autonomy;*
> - *a policy environment that is enabling rather than constraining.*
>
> *Source 2: The individual school. Teacher quality springs from schools organized with infrastructures that support good teaching and collaboration among teachers. Within the school, conditions have been created specifically to support the teaching and learning process; and more generally at an organizational level to establish frameworks, create roles, allocate responsibilities and generate ways of working that reflect the shared education values of the school.*
>
> *To the extents that teacher quality rests on school-level factors, the policy implications are:*
>
> - *pre-service education of new teachers that is to a large extent school-based;*
> - *decentralization of management and budget to the school level;*
> - *an education of control over school governance by the local (district) level;*

- *specificity in policy directives yet with high levels of support and the opportunity to adapt and experiment;*
- *a responsive system of external support surrounding the school that includes both inspection and advice;*
- *creation of networks of like-minded schools to exchange information and support;*
- *opportunities for schools to have a say in curriculum decision-making and to adapt mandated curricula to the local situation;*
- *the encouragement of self evaluation and planning at the school level;*
- *flexibility in provision of INSET (in-service teacher education) and staff development.*

Source 3: The external policy environment. Teacher quality is the result of coherent and well-tested policies relating pre-service and in-service teacher education, curriculum, student assessment and teacher appraisal. Educational excellence depends on faithful implementation of these policies, not on independent initiatives of individual teachers or schools.

- *a clear public mandate for executive action;*
- *consultative procedures in formation of policy;*
- *a broad and coherent range of complementary policy options;*
- *a central inspectorate to monitor the progress of individual schools;*
- *a central system of teacher evaluation;*
- *teacher education that complements the direction of the reforms;*
- *central support to assist in implementation;*
- *an information system and vocabulary to generate public debate on education;*

(Centre for Educational Research and Innovation. *Quality in Teaching* (1994) pp.113-117)

In order to be effective, these models depend on the systemic synergy that results when institutions and organizations offering teacher education programs, licensing and regulatory bodies, employers, members of the teaching profession, and the public have a common understanding of what defines the teaching profession.

Section C

Demonstrating Competency in the Teaching Profession: The Ontario Context

Ontario College of Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

The Ontario Context

Ontario has the potential to construct an integrated system to ensure competency in the teaching profession. At present, however, the various components of the Ontario system designed to ensure competence remain unconnected and disparate. As a result, even with the best intentions and efforts on the part of all stakeholders systemic dysfunction results. In such a system, the whole is actually less than the sum of its parts.

What are "the parts" related to the concept of ensuring competency in the Ontario education system? One component will be the image held by the profession and the public about "what it means to me to be a competent teacher". Individuals, organizations, institutions and employers have generated lists of expectations expressed through mission statements, employment performance review policies, and a wealth of published articles.

A second component has been the provisions in the *Education Act* and Regulation 298 made under that Act that place responsibility for performance appraisal in publicly-funded systems with the employer. Each employer has the obligation to develop a performance appraisal system that, while operating within legislation, is unique to that particular employment situation. There are no standards or set of common expectations underlying the performance review system.

Most recently, the Ontario College of Teachers provided for a third component. The objects of the *College of Teacher Act, 1996* outline the power of the College to:

- *regulate the profession of teaching and to govern its members*
- *develop, establish and maintain qualifications for membership in the College*
- *accredit professional teacher education programs offered by post-secondary institutions*
- *accredit ongoing education programs for teachers offered by post-secondary institutions and other bodies*
- *issue, renew, amend, suspend, cancel, revoke and reinstate certificates of qualification and registraiton*
- *provide for the ongoing education of members of the College*
- *establish and enforce profession standards and ethical standards applicable to members of the College*
- *receive and investigate complaints against members of the College and to deal with discipline and fitness to practice issues*
- *develop, provide and accredit programs leading to certificates of qualification required for membership, including but not limited to certificates of qualification as a supervisory officer, and to issue, renew, amend, suspend, cancel, revoke and reinstate such additional certificates.*
- *communicate with the public on behalf of the members of the College.*
- *perform such additional functions as are prescribed by the regulations.*

(*Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996* Section 3)

For three years the College has worked toward setting the policies and procedures in place to accomplish the mandate outlined in legislation. The Council of the College approved the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* in November 1999. This approval followed a process of research and consultation that involved thousands of members of the College and the public. The Council has approved, in principle, the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*. A validation period for this document will extend through to May 2000. The *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, along with the regulatory requirements for teacher education programs, now provide the foundation for the accreditation of pre-service teacher education and ongoing education programs in the province of Ontario. For the first time in the history of Ontario teacher education, there exists a common foundation for the design, implementation and review of teacher education programs.

The Ontario College of Teachers has begun the process of defining the teaching profession. All accredited teacher education programs in Ontario, from pre-service teacher education to supervisory official certification, will now contribute to supporting this image of the profession. The College has provided, in Roth's terms, the standard that will "represent the vision and provide a conception of teacher and teaching". The College, through the standards of practice and ethical standards, has articulated the first component necessary for the construction of an integrated approach to ensuring competency in the teaching profession. The profession and the public, through the consultation process, have generated an image of what constitutes a competent teacher in Ontario.

As outlined in Section B of this paper, the Council of Chief State School Officers in the United States reported that policies were being put in place to require new teachers to hold a degree with an undergraduate or graduate major in their chosen field. In fact, this has been the reality in Ontario for over twenty years. Teacher candidates must hold an undergraduate degree or equivalent and successfully complete at least one year of teacher training at an Ontario faculty of education.

All pre-service and in-service programs leading to licensure or professional certification in the province of Ontario must demonstrate that they support the standards of practice and ethical standards. The Ontario College of Teachers, as it works toward meeting its mandate to ensure the public that pre-service programs at faculties of education adequately prepare beginning teachers for Ontario classrooms, requires these programs to be accountable. They must support the standards of practice and the ethical standards in order to be accredited by the College.

By the fall of the year 2000, the Council of the Ontario College of Teachers will have received the panel reports for the initial accreditation reviews for all pre-service teacher education programs in Ontario. With an accreditation regulation in place, the College will then begin its accreditation review cycle for all faculty programs.

Accreditation is a status granted to an educational program that has been found to meet or exceed the criteria developed for the profession by the profession. Accreditation of pre-service teacher education programs by the College will:

- ensure that programs are reflecting changes in knowledge and practice
- assure that the indicators established in support of the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession* are demonstrated in the programs
- assist in the continuous improvement of the programs
- provide a means for the participation of practitioners in setting the requirements to enter the profession
- provide public accountability of the programs.

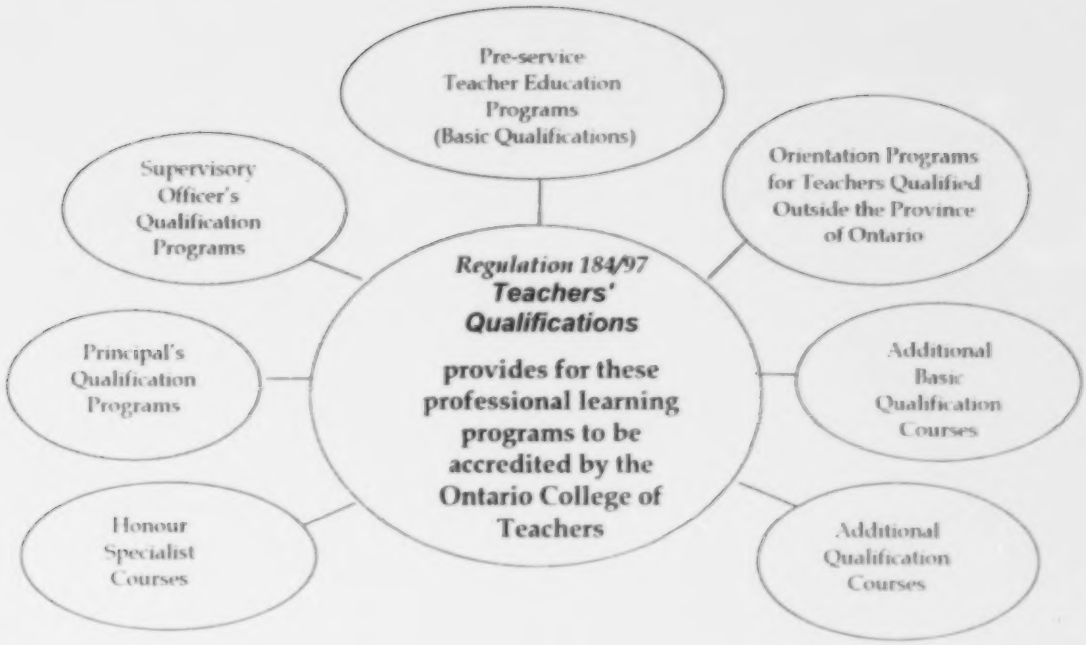
Accreditation is an on-going, cyclical process designed to facilitate the continuous improvement of pre-service teacher education programs. Any program, however excellent, is capable of improvement which must come from the program's own clear identification and understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Accordingly, the College pre-service teacher education accreditation process consists of these parts:

- the preparation by the faculty of education of an internal appraisal
- the collection of documentation to support the standards of practice and ethical standards
- an on-site visit by the Accreditation Panel.

All professional certification programs referenced in Regulation 184/97 of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* will, in future, also be accredited on the basis of the support they provide for the standards of practice and ethical standards. The College shall also hold the providers of these programs accountable for the content and quality of these programs. Currently the in-service teacher education programs are reviewed to ensure that they meet the basic requirements outlined in Regulation 184/97. A handbook outlining the policies and procedures for the accreditation of in-service teacher education programs listed in Regulation 184/97 is currently in development. This handbook will indicate that providers must ensure that in-service teacher education programs meet the regulatory requirements listed in Regulation 184/97 and support the standards of practice and ethical standards.

Members of the Ontario College of Teachers acquire the knowledge, skills and values that are part of these standards of practice and ethical standards through ongoing professional learning. The College has a mandate, in legislation, to identify and accredit professional learning programs that support the standards of practice and ethical standards. These programs constitute the core of a professional learning framework.

The College is currently seeking feedback from the profession and the public on this framework through a document titled *Consultation: The Professional Learning Framework*. The framework begins with the accredited professional learning offered through pre-service teacher education programs in Ontario. Options for ongoing accredited professional learning continue throughout the careers of all members on the Ontario College of Teachers. Both the pre-service teacher education programs and the accredited programs for in-service are made available only through organizations and institutions that have met criteria established by the College. Regulation 184/97 under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* identifies those programs now formally recognized by the Ontario College of Teachers. The Orientation Programs referenced in the graphic that follows are not currently operational. All other programs are underway.


Pre-service Teacher Education Programs (Basic Qualifications)
Supervisory Officer's Qualification Programs
Orientation Programs for Teachers Qualified Outside the Province of Ontario
Regulation 184/97 Teachers' Qualifications
provides for these professional learning programs to be accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers
Principal's Qualification Programs
Additional Basic Qualification Courses
Honour Specialist Courses
Additional Qualification Courses

Regulation 184/97 Certification Programs

Confirmed once again in the August 1999 *Professional Learning: A Survey by the Ontario College of Teachers*, members of the College continue to engage in professional learning. The survey found that ninety-two percent of the respondents confirmed their participation in at least one formal professional learning program during the previous two years. The College survey, conducted by the Institute for Social Research at York University, reported findings similar to those reported by the Canadian Teachers' Federation/Network for New Approaches to Lifelong Learning in the spring of 1999. In its cross-Canada survey, the CTF/NALL survey results confirmed that the teachers continue to be active learners.

Members of the College of Teachers engage in professional learning in order to improve their practice through their careers. They do this in a variety of ways. Some teaching assignments require specific academic credits. Some roles, such as the principalship, require professional certification courses. Teaching in a new division (primary, junior, intermediate, senior) may require an Additional Basic Qualification course. Placement in a special education assignment will require a course leading to an Additional Qualification in Special Education.

Members of the College of Teachers also engage in professional learning through their daily practice. Teachers learn every day in the classroom, in school and in whatever work environment in which they work. Learning is part of the teaching.

The College has the authority to develop ways to formally recognize forms of professional learning beyond those listed in *Regulation 184/97* made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*. These opportunities might include activities such as:

- enrollment in programs or courses offered through universities, colleges or other institutions that do not necessarily lead to an academic degree
- participation in subject specific professional organizations or councils
- involvement with local school council or community/school committees
- serving as an associate teacher
- mentoring teachers new to the profession
- developing and implementing new curriculum resources
- conducting action research on some aspect of their practice
- visiting other educational settings
- engaging in professional reading
- maintaining a professional portfolio
- contributing to a professional journal
- using technology for accessing information or structured distance education programs

Professional learning is at the heart of teacher professionalism. The content of the professional learning may vary. The rationale and resources for professional learning may vary. The way in which members of the College engage in professional learning may vary. The constant will be that these programs included in the professional learning framework directly support the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*. Through the professional learning framework, the Ontario College of Teachers meets its legislated mandate to "provide for the ongoing education of members of the College".

As indicated earlier, members of the profession and the public have been invited to provide feedback to a document, *Consultation: Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession*. The development and consultation processes have involved hundreds of members of the College and the public in structured focus groups, writing teams and presentations. A feedback response form was included in the document. This document was mailed to all education stakeholder groups and other interested individuals and groups directly involved in the development process. The text of the consultation document is also posted on the College web site. Data gathered through this consultation process will inform decisions relating to the revision of the professional learning framework. Once endorsed in principle by Council, a validation period will follow.

Once established, the professional learning framework will provide Ontario's first coherent structure for professional licensure and certification. The impact of this coherent structure, over time, will be profound.

The College is proceeding to meet its mandate to ensure teacher competency through other means such as the provision for a language proficiency test. In May of 1999, Council adopted a policy requiring applicants trained in a language other than English or French to provide proof of proficiency in either language by submitting results of a language proficiency test with their application to the College. In July and August of 1999, at the request of Council, the College set up Test Score Review Panels comprised of College members, education stakeholders and experts in the field of language-proficiency testing. These panels made recommendations to the Registrar of the College on passing scores on four language proficiency tests. The Registrar has accepted their recommendations and the passing scores have been included in the text of the policy. Implementation of the policy has been delayed pending the provincial government response to the enabling regulation proposed by Council in May 1999.

The College is also investigating the establishment of an Orientation Program requirement for all teachers who obtain their certification outside the province of Ontario and who seek membership in the Ontario College of Teachers. Provision for an Orientation program does currently exist in Regulation 184/97 but no program has been available or required in recent years. The College is currently considering a variety of options related to the design, development and implementation of an Orientation Program. The purpose of this program would be to ensure that teachers qualified in jurisdictions outside the province of Ontario are knowledgeable about, and supportive of, the curriculum policy, legislative requirements and cultural values specific to the Ontario context.

The College, by defining the teaching profession through the standards of practice, ethical standards and other provisions that set standards for the profession, such as the language proficiency test, sets high expectations for public accountability. It has the potential to build capacity in the profession through the provision of pre-service and ongoing teacher education programs based on these standards. It has the capacity to ensure, through the review, assessment and accreditation process, that these programs are of high quality and that they prepare Ontario educators for today's classrooms, schools and systems.

Ensuring competency in the teaching profession is not the task of the Ontario College of Teachers alone. Other education stakeholders have defined roles. The government has responsibility for Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act*. Section 11 of the regulation outlines the responsibility of principals with regard to conducting performance appraisals of teaching staff. This section establishes no basic requirements for such appraisals. Section 19 of the regulation outlines the qualifications of teachers required to teach in specific subject areas, educational settings, and programs. This section of the regulation also permits the assignment of a member of the College "...with due regard for the safety and welfare of the pupils and the provision of the best program, ... by mutual agreement of the teacher and the principal and with the approval of the appropriate supervisory officer..." to be assigned to teach in a subject area or program for which he/she does not have the proper qualification as indicated on the Certification of Qualification (subsections 4 and 5). The appropriateness of performance reviews conducted in such instances could be open to question. For the most part, such appraisals or practice reviews are carried out at the school level.

Employers may work with teacher federations and principal and supervisory officer organizations to review local policies and procedures to ensure that they are designed to build capacity in the teaching profession.

This integrated approach to ensuring competency in the teaching profession has the potential to lead to a "whole that is greater than any of its parts". The Ontario College of Teachers is putting the pieces together for the kind of systemic reform envisioned by others before it in Ontario, the United States, and Australia. The process for this systemic reform is based on research and consultation. Any effort to construct an integrated approach to ensuring competency in the teaching profession, for best results, must find its way into the mandate already set in motion by the College.

The College will make a significant contribution to building this integrated approach to ensuring competency in the teaching profession. Other organizations and institutions must make their contribution. The College recognizes the important contribution in developing professional competency already made by district school boards, teacher federations, faculties of education, and the Ministry of Education. Systemic reform requires the willing cooperation of the major stakeholders - the College of Teachers, the Ministry of Education, the faculties of education, district school boards, teacher federations, the public and all members of the profession. An integrated approach to ensuring competency in the teaching profession is in the best interest of the profession. It is in the best interest of the public. Most importantly, it is in the best interest of the students in Ontario classrooms.

Section D

Consultation: Addressing the Range of Options Emerging from the Research

Ontario College of Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

The Minister of Education writes in her letter dated November 10, 1999 to the Chair of the Ontario College of Teachers: "*In a rapidly changing world, we have an obligation to ensure that students receive the highest quality education and that teachers maintain their certification by having current skills and knowledge*". The delivery of quality education is dependent on quality teachers. The College has a mandate to ensure that the programs that lead to licensure and the maintenance of ongoing professional certification are of the highest quality. As has been demonstrated, the College is not only ready and willing but also able to carry out this mandate. However, as the research summarized in this paper confirms, the regular assessment of teachers' skills and knowledge requires an integrated approach if there is to be success.

The Minister of Education, in her address to the College Council on November 18, 1999 recognized that the challenge to provide high quality education requires a collaborative effort.

> *...And it's certainly one of the reasons I am here today because the Ontario College of Teachers is a key partner in a collaborative effort to provide the best quality education system we can for our children. I need your advice, I need your support, I need your skills, I need your expertise ... if we are going to jointly equip Ontario's youth with the learning tools and the knowledge that they're going to need to succeed in a very rapidly changing world.*
> (Minister Ecker, Address to Council, November 18, 1999)

Indeed, the College is a partner in this collaboration and any integrated approach will require all education partners also to assume lead roles in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

In her address to Council, the Minister also reminded members that past education approaches have cried out for "*fresh ideas and new directions*". For its part, in fact, the College is establishing new directions and generating fresh ideas as it establishes policies and procedures within its mandate to ensure quality teacher education programs and licensing practices. Through this paper, the College encourages other education partners, including the government, within their respective mandates, to do the same.

In order to provide to the Minister advice that reflects "*fresh ideas and new directions*", the College of Teachers presents the options that follow as the basis for consultation with members of the College, with the public, and with education stakeholders. What is presented is a range of some possible options to generate thought and discussion. These options emerge from the extensive research review undertaken by the College with regard to professional competency. This research has been summarized in earlier sections of this paper.

The options are organized as outlined in the letter from the Minister dated November 10, 1999: "*I am seeking the advice of the College on how to implement a teacher testing program that is cost-effective and within the following parameters:*

- *regular assessment of the teachers' knowledge and skills*
- *methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques*
- *a link to recertification*
- *remediation for those who fail assessments, and*
- *de-certification as a consequence if remediation is unsuccessful*"

Recognizing the Minister's request for cost-effectiveness, the College will incorporate cost implications as it formulates its advice to the Minister. In this regard, the APPLE principle developed by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing and utilized by the College of Nurses of Ontario has been a good guide and might prove valuable as input is developed and forwarded to the College.

A = Administratively feasible
P = Publicly credible
P = Professionally acceptable
L = Legally defensible
E = Economically feasible

As outlined in the timeframe presented to the Minister and included in the Introduction to this paper, the College has scheduled formal consultation from February 14, 2000 through March 3, 2000. Members of the College and members of the public may respond by using the College web site, http://www.oct.on.ca, or in writing to the attention of the Chair, Ontario College of Teachers, 121 Bloor Street East, 6th Floor, Toronto, ON M4W 3M5. In addition to the research briefing session held for their representatives at the College on December 16, 1999, education stakeholders will participate in structured consultation sessions on February 28, 29 and March 1, 2, 2000 at the College. Sessions will be available in both English and French. Stakeholder groups and organizations have been invited also to submit papers prepared as input to the College. All consultation will conclude by March 3, 2000.

The College needs to hear comments on the range of options as well as other directions which may not be included in this paper. In this regard, a response form is included at the end of this section of the paper.

Following the completion of the consultation process, formal recommendations will be developed for consideration by the College Council as it formulates the advice that will be forwarded to the Minister of Education.

A. Minister's Parameter: Regular assessment of teachers' knowledge and skills

Option A1

The Ontario College of Teachers will continue to refine the policies and processes for the accreditation of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs to ensure that such programs meet both the regulatory requirements outlined in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* and the standards of practice and ethical standards approved by the Council of the College.

Background

Expectations regarding measures to assess and evaluate teacher candidates and members of the College of Teachers in both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs offered under the authority of Regulation 184/97 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* will be a requirement of the revised guidelines for all teacher education courses. These revisions are underway. Evidence of assessment and evaluation policies and practices must be provided to the Accreditation Committee and College staff as part of the accreditation process.

The College must be assured that those who are engaging in these programs are being granted certification that is based on evaluation criteria that reflect the demands of students, school boards, and the teaching profession. Assessment instruments for candidates enrolled in these licensing and certification programs may involve tools such as written tests and assignments.

Under the regulatory powers of the College, teacher education providers that do not provide evidence of effective policies and practices in regard to candidate assessment risk the loss of accredited status. Teacher candidates and members of the College who do not fulfill the requirements to successfully complete teacher education pre-service or in-service programs are not granted appropriate professional certification.

Option A2

The Minister of Education be requested to review and revise those aspects of Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act* that relate to the performance appraisal of members of the Ontario College of Teachers such that the components of performance appraisal be set by the government.

Background

Performance appraisal and professional certification are both linked to professional competency. The basis upon which the profession is licensed and certified must have some relationship to the ongoing performance appraisal process. In assuming an integrated approach to the issue of competency in the profession, both areas must be addressed. To all intents and purposes, the performance appraisal is, in fact, a practice review. The components for performance appraisal, set by the government, would be implemented consistently by employers across the province. A provincial policy directive of what is to be included in the performance appraisal or practice review of all members of the College would be required. Local employers of members of the College, working in concert with principal and supervisory officer organizations and teacher federations, can adapt provincial components to the local employment setting but the provincial expectations must be respected.

Option A3

The Minister of Education be requested to review and revise, where appropriate, those aspects of Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act* that relate to the assignment of teachers to programs/subjects for which they do not hold additional qualifications as outlined in Regulation 184 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*.

Background

Regulation 298 assumes that 'quality assurance' is provided through the duty of principals to conduct regular performance appraisals of teaching staff. While the underlying assumption of the Regulation is that teachers, under Section 19(1), are assigned or appointed according to the qualifications recorded on their certificates, Sections 19(4) and 19(5) allow teachers to be assigned outside of their qualifications. The section permits assignment "... with due regard for the safety and welfare of the pupils and the provision of the best program, ... by mutual agreement of the teacher and the principal and with approval of the appropriate supervisory officer..". For example, a secondary teacher may be assigned to the primary division, a primary teacher to secondary physical education, a secondary English teacher to any one of the general studies subjects listed in Schedule A of Regulation 184/97 under the *College of Teachers Act/96*. If guarantees of teaching quality are to be given to the Ontario public, teacher assignments should be consistent with the registered qualifications of the teachers. The performance appraisal system should demonstrate both rigour and fairness; teachers should be assessed within their area of qualification.

B. Minister's Parameter: Methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques

Option B1

In addition to possession of an undergraduate university degree or other qualifications appropriate to the division/subject area of concentration, applicants to a teacher education program at an Ontario faculty of education be required to complete successfully a written assessment of basic knowledge and skills with regard to literacy and numeracy prior to entrance to the program.

Background

Currently, the two French-language faculties of education in Ontario do test for fluency in the language of instruction, i.e. French. The English-language faculties have no standard process. No faculties test for numeracy skills as a pre-requisite for admission. While there is research on the issue, there is little research evidence of a correlation between scores on tests for basic knowledge and skills and teacher competency. A written assessment at entry to a teacher education program may provide some assurance that prospective teachers possess at least minimum standards with respect to literacy and numeracy. Success on the assessment would be a pre-requisite for entry to the teacher education program and administration of the test could be a condition of accreditation of the faculty of education program by the College of Teachers. A standardized test, norm-referenced for the Ontario population and designed to be administered in a variety of locations by Ontario faculties of education or their agent(s), could serve this purpose.

Option B2

Teacher candidates enrolled in a teacher education program in Ontario, in addition to program and practicum requirements, be required to complete a written assessment of knowledge and skills related to Ontario curriculum, pedagogy, and education legislation and policy appropriate for beginning teachers prior to entrance to the profession in Ontario.

Background

While there is research on the issue, there is little research evidence of a correlation between successful completion of a customized assessment of this nature and teacher competency. A written assessment may provide some assurance that the teacher candidate has acquired a minimum standard with respect to a knowledge of Ontario curriculum, pedagogy, and appropriate education legislation and policy. The assessment, administered either upon exit from the faculty of education or at the time of entry to registration, should demonstrate the ability of the prospective teacher to enter the teaching

profession with the knowledge and skills articulated in the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, as approved by the Ontario College of Teachers. Success on the assessment would be a pre-requisite for entry to the teaching profession in Ontario and membership in the College. Appropriate standardized tests, norm-referenced for the Ontario population and designed to be administered in a variety of locations by Ontario faculties of education or their agent(s), could serve this purpose.

Option B3

Applicants for membership in the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside Ontario, in addition to program and practicum requirements, be required to complete a written assessment of knowledge and skills related to Ontario curriculum, pedagogy, and education legislation and policy appropriate for beginning teachers prior to entrance to the profession in Ontario.

Background

While there is research on this matter, there is little research evidence of a correlation between successful completion of a customized assessment of this nature and teacher competency. A written assessment may provide some assurance that the applicant has acquired a minimum standard with respect to a knowledge of Ontario curriculum, pedagogy, and appropriate education legislation and policy. The assessment, administered at the time of entry to registration, should demonstrate the ability of the applicant to enter the teaching profession in Ontario with the knowledge and skills articulated in the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, as approved by the Ontario College of Teachers. Success on the assessment would be a pre-requisite for entry to the teaching profession in Ontario and membership in the College. Appropriate standardized tests, norm-referenced for the Ontario population and designed to be administered in a variety of locations by Ontario faculties of education or their agent(s), could serve this purpose.

Option B4

Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to newly-graduated teachers employed on a regular basis to ensure that beginning teachers continue to develop and to refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be required to report successful completion by the teacher for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.

Background

The first two years of a teaching career are challenging. An induction program could include a range of options such as an orientation program, mentoring by experienced teachers and principals/vice-principals, reflective journal writing, on-line support through discussion groups consisting of new and experienced teachers, formal in-service sessions offered locally, and enrolment in courses outlined in Regulation 184/97 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*. The College would establish the parameters for the induction program. Successful completion of the induction program, as determined by the supervising principal, could be noted on the Certificate of Qualification and this information made available on the public register of the College.

Option B5

Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to newly-graduated teachers employed on a regular basis to ensure that beginning teachers continue to develop and to refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be required to report successful completion by the teacher in order that an Interim Certificate of Qualification issued at entry to registration with the Ontario College of Teachers be converted to a Certificate of Qualification.

Background

The first two years of a teaching career are challenging. An induction program could include a full range of options such as an orientation program, mentoring by experienced teachers and principals/vice-principals, reflective journal writing, on-line support through discussion groups consisting of new and experienced teachers, formal in-service sessions offered locally, and enrolment in courses outlined in Regulation 184/97 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*. The College would establish the parameters for the induction program. Newly-graduated teachers first would be issued an Interim Certificate of Qualification which would be converted to a Certificate of Qualification upon successful completion of the induction program. This information would be available on the public register of the College.

Option B6

Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to members of the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside Ontario and are employed on a regular basis for the first time in Ontario to ensure that they develop and refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be required to report successful completion by the teacher for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.

Background

For a member of the College who completed his or her teacher education program outside of Ontario, the first two years teaching in Ontario are challenging. An induction program could include a range of options such as an orientation program, mentoring by experienced teachers and principals/vice-principals, reflective journal writing, on-line support through discussion groups consisting of new and experienced teachers, formal in-service sessions offered locally, and enrolment in courses outlined in Regulation 184/97 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*. The College would establish the parameters for the induction program. Successful completion of the induction program, as determined by the supervising principal, could be noted on the Certificate of Qualification and this information made available on the public register of the College.

Option B7

Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to members of the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside Ontario and are employed on a regular basis for the first time in Ontario to ensure that they develop and refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be required to report successful completion by the teacher in order that an Interim Certificate of Qualification issued at entry to registration with the College be converted to a Certificate of Qualification.

Background

For a member of the College who completed his or her teacher education program outside Ontario, the first two years teaching in Ontario are challenging. An induction program could include a range of options such as an orientation program, mentoring by experienced teachers and principals/vice-principals, reflective journal writing, on-line support through discussion groups consisting of new and experienced teachers, formal in-service sessions offered locally, and enrolment in courses outlined in Regulation 184/97 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*. The College would establish the parameters for the induction program. Members of the College who completed their teacher education program outside Ontario first would be issued an Interim Certificate of Qualification which would be converted to a Certificate of Qualification upon successful completion of the induction program and any other certification requirements. This information would be available on the public register.

Option B8

The requirements for the accreditation of ongoing professional certification courses listed in Regulation 184/97 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* will include a well-defined provision for the assessment of candidates based upon criteria developed and approved by the Ontario College of Teachers.

Background

Successful completion of additional qualifications programs and courses outlined in Regulation 184/97 provides evidence of enhanced professional capacity. This evidence must be based upon criteria that demonstrate that the program has been designed to enhance the standards of the profession and that the candidate has successfully met these criteria. Assessment instruments for course participants could include examples of written assignments and written tests. The College of Teachers is currently involved in an extensive review designed to enhance the effectiveness of the Regulation 184/97 programs.

Option B9

All members of the Ontario College of Teachers retain a professional portfolio highlighting their ongoing professional learning and achievements that is reported to the College periodically by employers, perhaps once every three to five years.

Background

Ongoing professional learning is included in the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and is part of 'what it means to be a teacher'. A portfolio record of professional learning and achievements provides evidence of continued growth and commitment to professional competency by both new and experienced members of the College. Organized around both the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, a standardized electronic format portfolio, with an optional hard-copy component, would be developed by the College of Teachers for use by all members. The *Professional Learning Framework* of the College would determine general expectations of the portfolio and the professional learning recorded in the portfolio would reflect the actual work assignment of the member. In the case of a teacher assigned to a classroom, the portfolio would include professional learning relevant to the specific classroom assignment. Because the portfolio would reflect actual work assignments of members of the College, employers could report periodically, perhaps once every three to five years, on the currency of the portfolio. This report could be noted on the Certificate of Qualification and information would be available to the public through the public register of the College. This may demonstrate the commitment of the member to ongoing professional learning and the maintenance of competency.

Option B10

All members of the Ontario College of Teachers be required to prepare an annual professional growth plan.

Background

A professional growth plan would provide a 'road map' for the ongoing professional learning of the College member in any given year. The plan could outline and define the exemplars to be included in a professional portfolio maintained by the member of the College.

Option B11

All members of the Ontario College of Teachers be required to participate in prescribed ongoing education and to submit evidence of such participation to the College.

Background

Under Section 40 (24-26) of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*, the College can direct that all members participate in prescribed education. Presently, prescribed learning is mandated for members of the College of Teachers who wish to acquire additional qualifications as outlined in Regulation 184 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*. This issue is currently included in the *Professional Learning Framework* consultation process. Ongoing professional learning is included in the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*. Evidence of participation could be forwarded to the College at regular intervals, perhaps every three to five years, and be recorded on the Certificate of Qualification and be available to the public through the College register. The *Professional Learning Framework* developed by the College would determine the general expectations of the prescribed learning which could be supported by a portfolio retained by the member. Prescribed learning would include programs accredited by the College and presented by providers registered with the College. Also included may be other forms of 'in-practice' learning identified by the member of the College and included in the *Professional Learning Framework*. Prescribed learning may provide assurance that members of the College are knowledgeable about aspects such as Ontario curriculum, student assessment, and effective pedagogy.

C. Minister's Parameter: a link to recertification

Option C1

Processes be established for the ongoing performance appraisal process outlined in Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act* to include the regular review of the teacher's professional portfolio developed by the Ontario College of Teachers and organized around both the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*.

Background

Currently, employers retain the right to establish the specifics of a local performance appraisal process for members of the Ontario College of Teachers. This process should include a range of ways of assessing the ongoing competence and professional learning of members of the College. One of the assessment tools could be a professional portfolio highlighting the professional learning and achievements of College members. Organized around both the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*, the portfolio format would be developed by the College of Teachers for use by all members.

Option C2

An orientation program be established for members of the Ontario College of Teachers who return to the profession following a break in employment in education in Ontario for a period of five years or more and successful completion of the program be reported by the employer for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.

Background

The context of the teaching profession is constantly evolving and a member of the College must have current knowledge and skills to be competent. The College of Teachers would develop the parameters for the orientation program. Successful completion of the program be noted on the Certificate of Qualification and this information made available on the public register of the College.

Option C3

An orientation program be established for members of the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside of Ontario, and successful completion of the program be reported for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.

Background

The context of the teaching profession is constantly evolving and a member of the College must have current knowledge and skills to be competent. The College of Teachers would develop the parameters for the orientation program. Successful completion of the program would be noted on the Certificate of Qualification and this information made available on the public register of the College.

D. Minister's Parameter: Remediation for those who fail assessments

Option D1

The process for written assessment of basic knowledge and skills with regard to literacy and numeracy prior to entrance to a teacher education program in Ontario include a provision for remediation for unsuccessful candidates.

Background

The remediation process could be identified as part of the selection criteria when determining what standardized test or tests would be employed. It must be understood that there would need to be an identified 'threshold' below which candidates would be denied admission to the program.

Option D2

Ontario faculties of education be required to demonstrate during the accreditation process conducted by the Ontario College of Teachers that there are policies and processes in place to support and remediate teacher candidates experiencing difficulty meeting program assessment requirements and to provide for the exit from the program of candidates who continue to experience difficulty.

Background

Policies and processes to support teacher candidates experiencing difficulty could be part of the teacher education program offered through all Ontario faculties of education. Measures to record evidence of this support and remediation may be made available to members of the accreditation panel during the College accreditation process. Also, faculties of education must be prepared to demonstrate the exit procedures from the program of candidates who continue to experience difficulty.

Option D3

All providers of in-service programs accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers will be required to demonstrate through the accreditation process that policies and processes are in place to support and remediate candidates experiencing difficulty in meeting program assessment requirements.

Background

Policies and processes to support candidates experiencing difficulty will be a part of in-service programs offered by all providers. This will be reviewed during the College accreditation process established for ongoing professional learning programs included in the *Professional Learning Framework* of the College.

Option D4

The Minister of Education be requested to ensure that employers provide support and remediation for members of the Ontario College of Teachers when issues of teacher competency arise as part of the performance appraisal process required by Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act*.

Background

Under Section 11 (4) of Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act*, assistance and reasonable time to improve must be included in any performance appraisal process administered by employers for members of the Ontario College of Teachers.

E. Minister's Parameter: De-certification as a consequence if remediation is unsuccessful

Option E1

Legislation be introduced to ensure that employers be required to notify the Ontario College of Teachers where there are members whose ongoing performance appraisals, after the provision to the members of appropriate support and remediation, cause the employer to be concerned about the members' possible incompetence, in accordance with Section 30 (3) of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*, incapacity, in accordance with Section 31 (2), or professional misconduct, in accordance with Regulation 437/97.

Background

Employers are required to conduct ongoing performance appraisals or practice reviews of members of the Ontario College of Teachers as outlined in Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act*. In cases of difficulty, the employer is required by regulation to provide support to the member in order to facilitate improvement in practice. In those circumstances where support does not lead to improved performance, the employer should be required to notify the College in accordance with Section 47 (3) of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*. These notifications would then lead to a determination by the Investigation Committee as to whether the matter should be forwarded to the Discipline Committee or the Fitness to Practice Committee, or be dismissed. The Discipline Committee and the Fitness to Practice Committee have the authority under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* to suspend or revoke a member's certificate to teach, or to impose terms, conditions or limitations on a certificate, or to require that specified terms are met by the member.

Consultation Response to

A Consultation Paper: Formulating a Response to the Letter of November 10, 1999 from the Minister of Education re a Teacher Testing Program

Response data provided by:

Stakeholder:_____
Contact Person:_____
Telephone Number:(____)_____

*** Please note that respondents must identify themselves for their submission to be considered.**

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter A: Regular assessment of teachers' knowledge and skills				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option A1 The Ontario College of Teachers will continue to refine the policies and processes for the accreditation of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs to ensure that such programs meet both the regulatory requirements outlined in the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* and the standards of practice and ethical standards approved by the Council of the College.				
Option A2 The Minister of Education be requested to review and revise those aspects of Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act* that relate to the performance appraisal of members of the Ontario College of Teachers such that the components of performance appraisal be set by the government.				

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter A: Regular assessment of teachers' knowledge and skills				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option A3 The Minister of Education be requested to review and revise, where appropriate, those aspects of Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act* that relate to the assignment of teachers to programs/subjects for which they do not hold additional qualifications as outlined in Regulation 184 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*.				
Other Option(s)				

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter B: Methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option B1 In addition to possession of an undergraduate university degree or other qualifications appropriate to the division/subject area of concentration, applicants to a teacher education program at an Ontario faculty of education be required to complete successfully a written assessment of basic knowledge and skills with regard to literacy and numeracy prior to entrance to the program.				
Option B2 Teacher candidates enrolled in a teacher education program in Ontario, in addition to program and practicum requirements, be required to complete a written assessment of knowledge and skills related to Ontario curriculum, pedagogy, and education legislation and policy appropriate for beginning teachers prior to entrance to the profession in Ontario.				

Minister's Parameter B: Methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option B3 Applicants for membership in the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside Ontario, in addition to program and practicum requirements, be required to complete a written assessment of knowledge and skills related to Ontario curriculum, pedagogy, and education legislation and policy appropriate for beginning teachers prior to entrance to the profession in Ontario.				
Option B4 Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to newly-graduated teachers employed on a regular basis to ensure that beginning teachers continue to develop and to refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be required to report successful completion by the teacher for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.				

Minister's Parameter B: Methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option B5 Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to newly-graduated teachers employed on a regular basis to ensure that beginning teachers continue to develop and to refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be required to report successful completion by the teacher in order that an Interim Certificate of Qualification issued at entry to registration with the Ontario College of Teachers be converted to a Certificate of Qualification.				
Option B6 Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to members of the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside Ontario and are employed on a regular basis for the first time in Ontario to ensure that they develop and refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be				

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Minister's Parameter B: Methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
required to report successful completion by the teacher for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.				
Option B7 Employers be required to provide a two-year induction program to members of the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside Ontario and are employed on a regular basis for the first time in Ontario to ensure that they develop and refine the knowledge and skills required by members of the teaching profession and be required to report successful completion by the teacher in order that an Interim Certificate of Qualification issued at entry to registration with the College be converted to a Certificate of Qualification.				

Minister's Parameter B: Methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option B8 The requirements for the accreditation of ongoing professional certification courses listed in Regulation 184/97 made under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96* will include a well-defined provision for the assessment of candidates based upon criteria developed and approved by the Ontario College of Teachers.				
Option B9 All members of the Ontario College of Teachers retain a professional portfolio highlighting their ongoing professional learning and achievements that is reported to the College periodically by employers, perhaps once every three to five years.				
Option B10 All members of the Ontario College of Teachers be required to prepare an annual professional growth plan.				

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter B: Methodologies which include both written and other assessment techniques				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option B11 All members of the Ontario College of Teachers be required to participate in prescribed ongoing education and to submit evidence of such participation to the College.				
Other Option(s)				

Minister's Parameter C: A link to re-certification				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option C1 Processes be established for the ongoing performance appraisal process outlined in Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act* to include the regular review of the teacher's professional portfolio developed by the Ontario College of Teachers and organized around both the *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* and the *Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession*.				
Option C2 An orientation program be established for members of the Ontario College of Teachers who return to the profession following a break in employment in education in Ontario for a period of five years or more and successful completion of the program be reported by the employer for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.				

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter C: A link to re-certification				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option C3 An orientation program be established for members of the Ontario College of Teachers who completed their teacher education program outside of Ontario, and successful completion of the program be reported for inclusion on the Certificate of Qualification.				
Other Option(s) 109				110

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter D: Remediation for those who fail assessments				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option D1 The process for written assessment of basic knowledge and skills with regard to literacy and numeracy prior to entrance to a teacher education program in Ontario include a provision for remediation for unsuccessful candidates.				
Option D2 Ontario faculties of education be required to demonstrate during the accreditation process conducted by the Ontario College of Teachers that there are policies and processes in place to support and remediate teacher candidates experiencing difficulty meeting program assessment requirements and to provide for the exit from the program of candidates who continue to experience difficulty.				

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

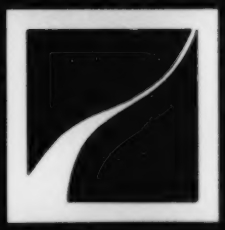
Minister's Parameter D: Remediation for those who fail assessments				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option D3 All providers of in-service programs accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers will be required to demonstrate through the accreditation process that policies and processes are in place to support and remediate candidates experiencing difficulty in meeting program assessment requirements.				
Option D4 The Minister of Education be requested to ensure that employers provide support and remediation for members of the Ontario College of Teachers when issues of teacher competency arise as part of the performance appraisal process required by Regulation 298 made under the *Education Act*. 113				11

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter D: Remediation for those who fail assessments				
Proposed Options	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Other Option(s)				

Stakeholder Group Preparation and Synthesis Chart

Minister's Parameter E: De-certification as a consequence if remediation is unsuccessful				
Proposed Option	Stakeholder Organization Response (Position)		Issues/Concerns/ Questions	Additional Comments/ Rationale
	Areas of Agreement with Proposed Option	Variations of Opinion Regarding Proposed Option		
Option E1 Legislation be introduced to ensure that employers be required to notify the Ontario College of Teachers where there are members whose ongoing performance appraisals, after the provision of support and remediation, cause the employer to be concerned about the members' possible incompetence, in accordance with Section 30(3) of the *Ontario College of Teachers Act/96*, incapacity in accordance with Section 3l(2), or professional misconduct, in accordance with Regulation 437/97.				
Other Option(s)				



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Ontario College of Teachers

Ordre des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario

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121 Bloor Street East, 6th Floor, Toronto ON M4W 3M5
Telephone: 416-961-8800 • Toll-free in Ontario: 1-888-534-2222
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